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PHILOSOPHY & THEOLOGY

SELECTED ESSAYS  
BY HAVELOCK ELLIS  
INTRODUCTION BY J. S. COLLIS

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HAVELOCK, ELLIS

*Author*

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NIETZSCHE

FOR some years the name of Friedrich Nietzsche has been the war-cry of opposing factions in Germany. It is not easy to take up a German periodical without finding some trace of the passionate admiration or denunciation which this man has called forth. If we turn to Scandinavia or to France, whither his fame and his work are also penetrating, we find that the same results have followed. And we may expect a similar outburst in England now that the translation of his works has at last begun. At present, however, I know of no attempt to deal with Nietzsche from the British point of view, and that is my excuse for trying to define his personality and influence.<sup>1</sup> I do not come forward as the champion of Nietzscheanism or of Anti-Nietzscheanism. It appears to me that any human individuality that has strongly aroused the love and hatred of men must be far too complex for absolute condemnation or absolute approval. Apart from praise or blame, which seem here alike impertinent, Nietzsche is without doubt an extraordinarily interesting figure. He is the modern incarnation of that image of intellectual pride which Marlowe created in Faustus. A man who has certainly stood at the finest summit of modern culture, who has thence made the most determined effort ever made to destroy modern morals, and who now leads a life as near to death as any life outside the grave can be, must needs be a tragic figure. It is a figure full of significance, for it represents one of the greatest spiritual forces which have appeared since Goethe, full of interest also to the psychologist, and surely not without its pathos, perhaps its horror, for the man in the street.

<sup>1</sup> This statement (made at the end of 1895) has ceased to be true but it explains the genesis of this study, and I leave it standing.

## I

It has only lately become possible to study Nietzsche's life-history. For a considerable period the Nietzsche-Archiv at Naumburg and Weimar has been accumulating copious materials which have now been utilized by Nietzsche's sister, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, in the production of an authoritative biography. This sister is herself a remarkable person; for many years she lived in close association with her brother, so that she was supposed, though without reason, to have exerted an influence over his thought; then she married Dr. Förster, the founder of the New Germany colony in Paraguay; on his death she returned home to write the history of the colony, and has since devoted herself to the care of her brother and his fame. Only the first two volumes of the *Leben Nietzsche's* have yet appeared, but they enable us to trace his development to his departure from Basel, and throw light on his whole career.

Nietzsche belonged, according to the ancestral tradition (though the name, I am told, is a common one in Wendish Silesia), to a noble Polish family called Nietzky, who on account of strong Protestant convictions abandoned their country and their title during the eighteenth century and settled in Germany. Notwithstanding the large amount of German blood in his veins, he always regarded himself as essentially a Pole. The Poles seemed to him the best endowed and most knightly of Sclavonic peoples, and he once remarked that it was only by virtue of a strong mixture of Sclavonic blood that the Germans entered the ranks of gifted nations. He termed the Polish Chopin the deliverer of music from German heaviness and stupidity, and when he speaks of another Pole, Copernicus, who reversed the judgment of the whole world, one may divine a reference to what in later years Nietzsche regarded as his own mission. In adult life Nietzsche's keen and strongly marked features were distinctly Polish, and when abroad

making, and also for music, and he soon began to show that inherited gift for improvisation by which he was always able to hold his audience spellbound. Even as a boy the future moralist made a deep impression on those who knew him, and he reminded one person of the youthful Jesus in the Temple. 'We Nietzsche's hate lies,' an aunt was accustomed to say; in Friedrich's ~~cerity~~ was a very deep-rooted trait, and he exercised an involuntary educational influence on those who came near him.

In 1858 a place was found for him at Pforta, a remarkable school of almost military discipline. Here many of the lines of his future activity were definitely laid down. At an even earlier date, excited by the influence of Humboldt, he had been fascinated by the ideal of universal culture, and at Pforta his intellectual energies began to expand. Here also, in 1859, when a pianoforte edition of *Tristan* was first published, Nietzsche became an enthusiastic Wagnerian, and even to the last *Tristan* remained for him 'music *par excellence*.' Here, too, he began those philological studies which led some years later to a professorship. He turned to philology, however, as he himself recognized, because of the need he felt to anchor himself to some cool logical study which would not grip his heart like the restless and exciting artistic instincts which had hitherto chiefly moved him. During the latter part of his stay at this very strenuous educational establishment young Nietzsche was a less brilliant pupil than during the earlier part. His own individuality was silently growing beneath the disciplinary pressure which would have dwarfed a less vigorous individuality. His philosophic aptitudes began to develop and take form; he wished also to devote himself to music; and he pined at the confinement, longing for the forest and the woodman's axe. It was the beginning of a long struggle between the impulses of his own self-centred nature and the duties imposed from without, by the school, the university, and, later, his professorship; he always strove to broaden and deepen these duties to the scope

of his own nature, but the struggle remained. It was the immediate result of this double strain that, during 1862, strong and healthy as the youth appeared, he began to suffer from headaches and eye-troubles, cured by temporary removal from the school. He remained extremely short-sighted, and it was only by an absurd error in the routine examination that, some years later, he was passed for military service in the artillery.

In the following year, 1863, Nietzsche met a school-fellow's sister, an ethereal little Berlin girl, who for a while appealed to 'the large, broad-shouldered, shy, rather solemn and stiff youth.' To this early experience, which never went beyond poetic *Schwärmerei*, his sister is inclined to trace the origin of Nietzsche's view of women as very fragile, tender little buds. The experience is also interesting because it appears to stand alone in his life. We strike here on an organic abnormality in this congenital philosopher. Nietzsche's attitude was not the crude misogyny of Schopenhauer, who knew women chiefly as women of the streets. Nietzsche knew many of the finest women of his time, and he sometimes speaks with insight and sympathy of the world as it appears to women; but there was clearly nothing in him to answer to any appeal to passion, and his attitude is well summed up in an aphorism of his own *Zarathustra*: 'It is better to fall into the hands of a murderer than into the dreams of an ardent woman.' 'All his life long,' his sister writes, 'my brother remained completely apart from either great passion or vulgar pleasure. His whole passion lay in the world of knowledge; only very temperate emotions remained over for anything else. In later life he was grieved that he had never attained to *amour passion*, and that every inclination to a feminine personality quickly changed to a tender friendship, however fascinatingly pretty the fair one might be.' He would expend much sympathy on unhappy lovers, yet he would shake his head, saying to himself or others: 'And all that over a little girl!'

Young Nietzsche left Pforta, in 1863, with the most various and incompatible scientific tastes and interests

(always excepting in mathematics, for which he never possessed any aptitude), but, as he himself remarked, none that would fit him for any career. One point in regard to the termination of his school-life is noteworthy: he chose Theognis as the subject of his valedictory dissertation. His meditations on this moralist and aristocrat, so contemptuous of popular rule, may have served as the starting-point of some of his own later views on Greek culture. In 1864 he became a student at Bonn, and the year that followed was of special import in his inner development; he finally threw off the beliefs of his early youth; he discovered his keen critical faculty; and self-contained independence became a visible mark of his character, though always disguised by amiable and courteous manners. At Bonn his life seems to have been fairly happy, though he was by no means a typical German student. He spent much money, but it was chiefly on his artistic tastes—music and the theatre—or on little tours. No one could spend less on eating and drinking; like Goethe and like Heine, he had no love for tobacco or for beer, and he was repelled by the thick, beery good-humour of the German student. People who drink beer and smoke pipes every evening, he always held, were incapable of understanding his philosophy; for they could not possibly possess the clarity of mind needed to grasp any delicate or complex intellectual problem. He returned home from Bonn 'a picture of health and strength, broad-shouldered, brown, with rather fair thick hair, and exactly the same height as Goethe'; and then went to continue his studies at Leipzig. 1/4

Notwithstanding the youth's efforts to subdue his emotional and aesthetic restlessness by cool and hard work, he was clearly tortured by the effort to find a philosophic home for himself in the world. This effort absorbed him all day long, frequently nearly all the night. At this time he chanced to take up on a book-stall a totally unknown work, entitled *Der Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*; in obedience to an unusual impulse he bought the book without consideration, and

from that moment began an acquaintance with Schopenhauer which for many years exerted a deep influence on his life. At that time, probably, he could have had no better guide into paths of peace; but even as a student he was a keen critic of Schopenhauer's system, valuing him chiefly as, in opposition to Kant, 'the philosopher of a reawakened classical period, a Germanized Hellenism.' Schumann's music and long solitary walks aided in the work of recuperation. A year or two later Nietzsche met the other great god who shared with Schopenhauer his early worship. 'I cannot bring my heart to any degree of critical coolness before this music,' he wrote, in 1868, after listening to the overture to the *Meistersinger*; 'every fibre and nerve in me thrills; it is a long time since I have been so carried away.' I quote these words, for we shall, I think, find later that they have their significance. A few weeks afterwards he was invited to meet the master, and thus began a relationship that for Nietzsche was fateful.

Meanwhile his philological studies were bringing him distinction. A lecture on Theognis was pronounced by Ritschl to be the best work by a student of Nietzsche's standing that he had ever met with. Then followed investigations into the sources of Suidas, a lengthy examination *De fontibus Diogenis Laertii*, and palaeographic studies in connection with Terence, Statius, and Orosius. He was now also consciously perfecting his German style, treating language, he remarks, as a musical instrument on which one must be able to improvise, as well as play what is merely learnt by heart. In 1869, when only in his twenty-sixth year, and before he had taken his doctor's degree, he accepted the chair of classical philology at Basel. He was certainly, as he himself said, not a born philologist. He had devoted himself to philology—I wish to insist on this significant point—as a sedative and tonic to his restless energy; in this he was doubtless wise, though his sister seems to suggest that he thereby increased his mental strain. But he had no real vocation for philology, and it is curious that when the Basel chair was

offered to him he was proposing to himself to throw aside philology for chemistry. Philologists, he declares again and again, are but factory hands in the service of science. At the best philology is a waste of acuteness, since it merely enables us to state facts which the study of the present would teach us much more swiftly and surely. Thus it was that he instinctively broadened and deepened every philological question he took up, making it a channel for philosophy and morals. With his specifically philological work we are not further concerned.

I have been careful to present the main facts in Nietzsche's early development because they seem to me to throw light on the whole of his later development. So far he had published nothing except in philological journals. In 1871, after he had settled at Basel, appeared his first work, an essay entitled *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik*, dedicated to Wagner. The conception of this essay was academic, but in Nietzsche's hands the origin of tragedy became merely the text for an exposition of his own philosophy of art at this period. He traces two art impulses in ancient Greece: one, starting in the phenomena of dreaming, which he associates with Apollo; the other, starting in the phenomena of intoxication, associated with Dionysus, and through singing, music, and dithyramb leading up to the lyric. The union of these, which both imply a pessimistic view of life, produced folk-song and finally tragedy, which is thus the outcome of Dionysiac music fertilized by Apollonian imagery. Socrates the optimist, with his views concerning virtue as knowledge, vice as ignorance, and his identification of virtue with happiness, led to the decay of tragedy and the triumph of Alexandrian culture, in the net of which the whole modern world is still held. Now, however, German music is producing a new birth of tragedy through Wagner, who has again united music and myth, inaugurated an era of art culture, and built the bridge to a new German heathenism. This remarkable essay produced considerable controversy and much

consternation among Nietzsche's philological friends and teachers, who resented — reasonably enough, we may well admit — the subordination of philology to modern philosophy and art, and could not understand the marvellous swan they had hatched. A philologist Nietzsche could never have continued, but this book publicly put an end to any hope of academic advancement. It remains characteristic of Nietzsche's first period, as we may call whatever he wrote before 1876, in its insistence on the primary importance of aesthetic as opposed to intellectual culture; and it is characteristic of his whole work in its grip of the connection between the problems and solutions of Hellenic times and the problems and solutions of the modern world. For Nietzsche the Greek world was not the model of beautiful mediocrity imagined by Winckelmann and Goethe, nor did it date from the era of rhetorical idealism inaugurated by Plato. The real Hellenic world came earlier, and the true Hellenes were sturdy realists enamoured of life, reverencing all its manifestations and signs, and holding in highest honour that sexual symbol of life which Christianity, with its denial of life, despises. Plato Nietzsche hated; he had wandered from all the fundamental instincts of the Hellene. His childish dialectic can only appeal, Nietzsche said, to those who are ignorant of French masters like Fontenelle. The best cure for Plato, he held, is Thucydides, the last of the old Hellenes who were brave in the face of reality; Plato fled from reality into the ideal and was a Christian before his time. Heraclitus was Nietzsche's favourite Greek thinker, and he liked to point out that the moralists of the Stoa may be traced back to the great philosopher of Ephesus.

*Die Geburt der Tragödie* is the prelude to all Nietzsche's work. He outgrew it, but in one point at least it sounds a note which recurs throughout all his work. He ever regarded the Greek conception of Dionysus as the key to the mystery of life. In *Götzendämmerung*, the last of his works, this is still affirmed, more distinctly than ever. 'The fundamental Hellenic instinct,' he

there wrote, 'was first revealed in the Dionysiac mysteries. What was it the Greek assured to himself in these mysteries? Eternal life, the eternal return of life, the future promised and consecrated in the present, the triumphal affirmation of life over death and change, *true* life or immortality through procreation, through the mysteries of sexuality. Thus the sexual symbol was to the Greeks the profoundest and most venerable symbol in the whole range of ancient piety. Every individual act of reproduction, of conception, of birth was a festival awaking the loftiest emotions. The doctrine of the mysteries proclaimed the holiness of pain; the pangs of childbirth sanctified all pain. All growth and development, every promise for the future, is conditioned by pain. To ensure the eternal pleasure of creation, the eternal affirmation of the will to live, the eternity of birth-pangs is absolutely required. All this is signified by the word Dionysus: I know no higher symbolism than this Greek Dionysiac symbolism. In it the deepest instinct of life, of the future of life, the eternity of life, is experienced religiously; generation, the way to life, is regarded as a sacred way. Christianity alone, with its fundamental horror of life, has made sexuality an impure thing, casting filth on the beginning, the very condition, of our life.'

Between 1873 and 1876 Nietzsche wrote four essays —on David Strauss, the Use and Abuse of History in relation to Life, Schopenhauer as an Educator, and Richard Wagner—which were published as a series of *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen*. The essay on Strauss was written after the Franco-Prussian war, amid the resulting outburst of flamboyant patriotism and the widely-expressed conviction that the war was a victory of 'German culture.' Fresh from the world of Greece, Nietzsche pours contempt on that assumption. Culture, he says, is, above all, unity of artistic style in every expression of a people's life. The exuberance of knowledge in which a German glories is neither a necessary means of culture nor a sign of it, being, indeed, more allied to the opposite of culture—to barbarism. It is

in this barbarism that the modern German lives, that is to say, in a chaotic mixture of all styles. Look at his clothing, Nietzsche continues, his houses, his streets, all his manners and customs. They are a turmoil of all styles in which he peacefully lives and moves. Such culture is really a phlegmatic absence of all sense of culture. Largely, also, it is merely a bad imitation of the real and productive culture of France which it is supposed to have conquered in 1870. Let there be no chatter, he concludes, about the triumph of German culture, for at present no real German culture exists. The heroic figures of the German past were not 'classics,' as some imagine; they were seekers after a genuine German culture, and so regarded themselves. The would-be children of culture in Germany to-day are Philistines without knowing it, and the only unity they have achieved is a methodical barbarism. Nietzsche attacks Strauss by no means as a theologian, but as a typical 'culture-Philistine.' He was moved to this by the recent publication of *Der Alte und der Neue Glaube*. I can well understand the emotions with which that book filled him, for I, too, read it soon after its publication, and can vividly recall the painful impression made on me by its homely pedestrianism, the dull unimaginativeness of the man who could only compare the world to a piece of machinery, an engine that creaks in the working, a sort of vast Lancashire mill in which we must spend every moment in feverish labour, and for our trouble perhaps be caught between the wheels and cogs. But I was young, and my youthful idealism, eager for some vital and passionate picture of the world, inevitably revolted against so tawdry and mechanical a conception. Nietzsche, then and ever, failed to perceive that there is room, after all, for the modest sturdy bourgeois labourer who, at the end of a hard life in the service of truth, sits down to enjoy his brown beer and Haydn's quartets, and to repeat his homely confession of faith in the world as he sees it. Nietzsche failed to realize that Strauss's limitations were essential to the work he had to do, and that he remained a not unworthy

follower of those German heroes who were not 'classics,' but honest seekers after the highest they knew. In this hypertrophied repulsion for the everyday work of the intellectual world we touch on a defect in Nietzsche's temperament which we must regard as fundamental, and which wrought in him at last to wildest issues.

In another of these essays, *Schopenhauer als Erzieher*, Nietzsche sets forth his opinions concerning his early master in philosophy. It is a significant indication of the qualities that attracted him to Schopenhauer that he compares him to Montaigne, thus at once revealing his own essential optimism, and the admiration which he then and always felt for the great French masters of wisdom. He regards Schopenhauer as the leader from Kant's caves of critical scepticism to the open sky with its consoling stars. Schopenhauer saw the world as a whole, and was not befooled by the analysis of the colours and canvas wherewith the picture is painted. Kant, in spite of the impulse of his genius, never became a philosopher. 'If any one thinks I am thus doing Kant an injustice, he cannot know what a philosopher is, i.e., not merely a great thinker but also a real man'; and he goes on to explain that the mere scholar who is accustomed to let opinions, ideas, and things in books always intervene between him and facts, will never see facts, and will never be a fact to himself; whereas the philosopher must regard himself as the symbol and abbreviation of all the facts of the world. It remained an axiom with Nietzsche that the philosopher must first of all be a 'real man.'

In this essay, which Nietzsche always preferred to his other early works, he thus for the first time clearly sets forth his conception of the philosopher as a teacher, a liberator, a guide to fine living; Schopenhauer's metaphysical doctrine he casts aside with indifference. Unconsciously, as in late years he seems to have admitted, he was speaking of himself and setting forth his own aims. Thus it is characteristic that he here also first expressed his conception of the value of individuality. Shakespeare had asked:

Which can say more  
Than this rich praise, that you alone are you?

But Shakespeare was only addressing a single beloved friend. Nietzsche addresses the same thought to the common 'you.' 'At bottom every man well knows that he can only live one single life in the world, and that never again will so strange a chance shake together into unity such singularly varied elements as he holds: he knows that, but he hides it like a bad conscience.' This was a sane and democratic individualism; in later years, as we shall see, it assumed stranger shapes.

At Basel Nietzsche lived in close communion with Wagner and Frau Cosima, who at this time regarded him as the prophet of the music-drama. The essay on Wagner, which starts from the standpoint reached in the previous essays, seems to justify this confidence. There is a deep analogy for those to whom distance is no obscuring cloud, Nietzsche remarks, between Kant and the Eleatics, Schopenhauer and Empedocles, Wagner and Aeschylus. 'The world has been orientalized long enough, and men now seek to be hellenized.' The Gordian knot has been cut and its strands are fluttering to the ends of the world; we need a series of Anti-Alexanders mighty enough to bring together the scattered threads of life. Wagner is such an Anti-Alexander, a great astringent force in the world. For 'it is not possible to present the highest and purest operations of dramatic art, and not therewith to renew morals and the state, education, and affairs.' Bayreuth is the sacred consecration on the morning of battle. 'The battles which art brings before us are a simplification of the actual battles of life; its problems are an abbreviation of the endlessly involved reckoning of human action and aspiration. But herein lies the greatness and value of art, that it calls forth the appearance of a simpler world, a shorter solution of the problems of life. No one who suffers in life can dispense with that appearance, just as no one can dispense with sleep.' Wagner has simplified the world, Nietzsche continues; he has

related music to life, the drama to music; he has intensified the visible things of the world, and made the audible visible. Just as Goethe found in poetry an expression for the painter's vocation he had missed, so Wagner utilized in music his dramatic instinct. And Nietzsche further notes the democratic nature of Wagner's art, so strenuously warm and bright as to reach even the lowliest in spirit. Wagner takes off the stigma that clings to the word 'common,' and brings to all the means of attaining spiritual freedom. 'For,' says Nietzsche, 'whosoever will be free, must make himself free; freedom is no fairy's gift to fall into any man's lap.' Such are the leading thoughts in an essay which remains an interesting philosophic appreciation of the place of Wagner's art in the modern world; yet one may well admit that it is often over-strained, with a strain that expresses the obscure struggle of nascent antagonism.

It is, indeed, *Wagner in Bayreuth* which brings to an end Nietzsche's first period, and leads up to the crash which inaugurated his later period. Hitherto Nietzsche's work was unquestionably sane both in substance and form. No doubt it had called forth much criticism; work so vigorous, sincere, and independent could not fail to arouse hostility. But as we look back to-day, these fine essays represent, with much youthful enthusiasm, the best that was known and thought in Germany a quarter of a century ago. Nietzsche's opinions on Wagner and Schopenhauer, on individualism and democracy, the significance of early Hellenism for moderns, the danger of an excessive historical sense, the conception of culture less as a striving after intellectual knowledge than as that which arouses within us the philosopher, the artist, and the saint—all these ideas, wild as some of them seemed to Nietzsche's German contemporaries, are the ideas which have now largely permeated European culture. The same cannot be said of his later ideas.

It was at the first Bayreuth festival in 1876 that this chapter in Nietzsche's life was finally closed. His

profound admiration for Wagner, his intimate intercourse with the greatest figure in the German world of art, had hitherto been the chief fact in his life. All his ideals of life and his hopes for the future had grown up around the figure of Wagner, who seemed the leader into a new Promised Land. During the previous two years, however, Nietzsche had seen little of Wagner, who had left Switzerland, and he had been unable to realize either his own development or Wagner's. Whatever enthusiasm Nietzsche may have felt in early life for a return to German heathenism, he was yet by race and training and taste by no means allied to primitive Germanism; it was towards Greece and towards France that his conception of national culture really drew him. Wagner was far more profoundly Teutonic, and in the Nibelung cycle, which Nietzsche was about to witness for the first time on the stage, Wagner had incarnated the spirit of Teutonic heathenism with an overwhelming barbaric energy which, as Nietzsche could now realize, was utterly alien to his own most native instincts. Thus it was that Bayreuth marked the crisis of a subtle but profound realization, the most intense self-realization he had yet attained.

The whole history of this Wagner episode in Nietzsche's life is full of interest. The circumstantial narrative in the second volume of the *Leben Nietzsche's* renders it clear at every point, and reveals a tragedy which has its significance for the study of genius generally. Nietzsche, it must be remembered, was more than thirty years younger than Wagner. He was younger, and also he was less corrupted by the world than Wagner. The great artist of the music-drama possessed, or had acquired, a practical good sense in all that concerned the realization of his own mighty projects such as always marks the greatest and most successful of the world's supreme artists. Like Shakespeare, he knew that the dyer's hand must ever be a little subdued to what it works in, if the radiant beauty of his stuffs is ever to be perfectly achieved. But Nietzsche could never endure any fleck on his hand; he shrank with

horror from every soiling contact; he was an artist who regarded life itself as the highest art. He could never have carried through the rough task of dying the gorgeous garments of a narrower but more perfectly attainable art. Nietzsche's idealized admiration for Wagner was complicated, after his appointment to the Basel chair, by a deep personal friendship for the Master, the chief friendship of his life. And his friendships were deeper than those of most; although they show no traces of sexual tincture they were hypertrophied by the defective sexuality of the man who always regarded friendship as a more massive and poignant emotion than love. That there were on either side any petty faults to cause a rift in friendship there is no reason whatever to believe. Nietzsche was above such, and Wagner's friendship was always hearty until he realized that Nietzsche was no longer his disciple, and then he dropped him, silently, as a workman drops a useless tool. In addition it must be noted that Nietzsche was probably at this time often over-strained, almost hysterical—at least so, we may gather, he impressed Wagner, who urged him to marry a rich wife and to travel—and he was still afflicted by a disorder which not even genius can escape in youth, he was still something of what we vulgarly call a 'prig'; he had not yet quite outgrown 'the youthful Jesus in the Temple.' 'Your brother with his air of delicate distinction is a most uncomfortable fellow,' said Wagner to Frau Förster-Nietzsche; 'one can always see what he is thinking; sometimes he is quite embarrassed at my jokes—and then I crack them more madly than ever.' Wagner's jokes, it appears, were of a homely and plebeian sort, not appealing to one who lived naturally and habitually in an atmosphere of keen intellectual activity. Bearing all this in mind, one can imagine the impression made upon Nietzsche by the inaugural festival at Bayreuth for which he had just written an impassioned and yet philosophic prologue. Wagner was absorbed in using all his considerable powers of managing men in finally vanquishing the difficulties

in his way. To any one who could see the festival from the inside, as Nietzsche was able to see it, there were all the inevitable squabbles and scandals and comic *contresmps* which must always mark the inception of a great undertaking, but which to-day are hidden from us, pilgrims from many lands, as we ascend to that hill-side structure which is the chief living shrine of art in Europe. And the people who were crowding in to this 'sacred consecration on the morning of battle' were aristocrats and plutocrats—bejewelled, corpulent, commonplace—headed by the old emperor, anxious to do his duty, decorously joining in the applause as he whispered 'Horrible! horrible!' to his aide-de-camp, and hurrying away as quickly as possible to the military manœuvres. There was more than enough here to make his own just issued battle-cry seem farcical to Nietzsche. All was conspiring to one end. The conception of the sanctity of Bayreuth, his personal reverence for Wagner were slipping away together, and at the same time he was forced to realize that the barbaric Germanism of this overpowering Nibelung music was not the music for him. His development would inevitably have carried him away from Wagner, but the festival brought on the crisis with a sudden clash. Nietzsche had finally conquered the mightiest of his false ideals, and stood for ever after free and independent of all his early gods; but the wounds of that victory were never quite closed to the last: a completely serene and harmonious conception of things, so far as Wagner was concerned, Nietzsche never attained.

It may well be that the change was also physical. The excitement of the festival precipitated an organic catastrophe towards which he had long been tending. His sister finds the original source of this catastrophe in the war of 1870. He desired to serve his country as a combatant, but the University would only allow him leave to attend to the wounded. The physical and emotional over-tension involved by his constant care of six young wounded men culminated in a severe illness, which led on to a never-ending train of symptoms

—eye-troubles, dyspepsia, headache, insomnia—which were perhaps aggravated by the reckless use of drugs. I have already noted passages which indicate that he was himself aware of a consuming flame within, and that from time to time he made efforts to check its ravages. That it was this internal flame which largely produced the breakdown is shown by the narrative of Nietzsche's friend, Dr. Kretzer, who was with him at Bayreuth. It was evident he was seriously ill, Kretzer tells us, utterly changed and broken down. His eye-troubles were associated, if not with actual brain disease, at all events with a high degree of neurasthenia.<sup>1</sup> At Bayreuth, Nietzsche was forced to realize the peril of his position as he had never realized it before. He could no longer disguise from himself that he must break with all the passionate interests of his past. It was an essential measure of hygiene, almost a surgical operation. This is indeed how he has himself put the matter. In the preface to *Der Fall Wagner*, he said that it had been to him a necessary self-discipline to take part against all that was morbid within himself, against Wagner, against Schopenhauer, against all the impassioned interests of modern life, and to view the world, so far as possible, with the philosopher's eyes from an immense height. And again he speaks of Wagner's art as a beaker of ecstasy so subtle and profound that it acts like poison and leaves no remedy at last but flight from the siren's cave. Nietzsche was

<sup>1</sup> The most convincing word-portrait of Nietzsche I have met with (by M. Schuré) dates from the visit to Bayreuth: 'I was struck both by the superiority of his intellect and the strangeness of his face. A broad forehead, short hair brushed back, the prominent cheek-bones of the Slav. The heavy moustache and the bold outline of the face would have given him the aspect of a cavalry officer if it had not been for his timid and haughty air. The musical voice and slow speech indicated the artist's organization, while the circumspect meditative carriage was that of a philosopher. Nothing more deceptive than the apparent calm of his expression. The fixed eye revealed the painful travail of thought. It was at once the eye of an acute observer and a fanatical visionary. The double character of this gaze produced a disquieted and disquieting impression, all the more so since it seemed to be always fixed on a single point. In moments of effusion this gaze was softened to a dream-like sweetness, but soon became hostile again.' This picture is confirmed by Nietzsche's sister, who also refers to his 'unusually large, beautiful, and brilliant eyes.'

henceforth in the position of a gouty subject who is forced to abandon port wine and straightway becomes an apostle of total abstinence. The remedy seems to have been fairly successful. But the disease was in his bones. Impassioning interests that were far more subtly poisonous slowly developed within him, and twelve years later flight had become impossible, even if he was still able to realize the need for flight.

Nietzsche broke very thoroughly with his past, yet the break has been exaggerated, and he himself often helped to exaggerate it. He was in the position of a beleaguered city which has been forced to abandon its outer walls and concentrate itself in the citadel; and however it may have been in ancient warfare, in spiritual affairs such a state of things involves an offensive attitude towards the former line of defence. The positions we have abandoned constitute a danger to the positions we have taken up. Many of the world's fiercest persecutors have but persecuted their old selves and there seems to be psychological necessity for such an attitude. Yet a careful study of Nietzsche's earlier activity reveals many germs of later developments. The critical attitude towards conventional morality, the individualism, the optimism, the ideal of heroism, which dominate his later thought, exist as germs in his earlier work. Even the flagrant contrast between *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* and *Der Fall Wagner* was the outcome of a gradual development. In the earlier essay Nietzsche had justly pointed out that Wagner's instincts were fundamentally dramatic. As years went on he brooded over this idea; the nimble and lambent wit of his later days played around it until Wagner became a mere actor in his work and in his life, a rhetorician, an incarnate falsehood, the personification of latter-day decadence, the Victor Hugo of music, the Bernini of music, the modern Cagliostro. At the same time he admits that Wagner represents the modern spirit, and that it is reasonable for a musician to say that though he hates Wagner he can tolerate no other music. The fact is, one may well repeat, that Nietzsche<sup>1</sup>

was not Teuton enough to abide for ever with Wagner. He compares him contemptuously with Hegel, cloud-compellers both, masters of German mists and German mysticism, worshippers of Wotan, the god of bad weather, the god of the Germans. 'How could they miss what we, we Halcyonians, miss in Wagner—*la gaya scienza*, the light feet, wit, fire, grace, strong logic, the dance of the stars, arrogant intellectuality, the quivering light of the south, the smooth sea—perfection?' It was scarcely, however, the Halcyonian in Nietzsche that stood between him and Wagner. That is well shown by his attitude towards *Parsifal*. Whatever we may think of the ideas embodied in *Parsifal*, it may yet seem to us the most solemn, the most graciously calm and beautiful spectacle that has ever been fitly set to music. In Nietzsche the thinker and the moralist were so much stronger than the artist that he could see nothing here but bad psychology, bad thinking, and bad religion.

The rebellion against Wagner was inevitable. It is evident that Nietzsche had not gained complete mastery of his own personality in his earlier work. It is brilliant, full of fine perceptions and critical insight, but as a personal utterance incomplete. It renders the best ideas of the time, not the best ideas that Nietzsche could contribute to the time. The shock of 1876 may have been a step towards the disintegration of his intellect, but it was also a rally, a step towards a higher self-realization. Nietzsche had no genuine affinity with Schopenhauer or with Wagner, though they were helpful to his development; he was no pessimist, he was no democrat. As he himself said: 'I understood the philosophic pessimism of the nineteenth century as the symptom of a finer strength of thought, a more victorious fullness of life. In the same way Wagner's music signified to me the expression of a Dionysiac insightness of soul in which I seemed to hear, as in an earthquake, the upheaval of the primitive powers of life, after age-long repression.' Now he only needed belief, 'golden, tender, oily melodies,' to soothe

the leaden weight of life, and these he found in *Carmen*.

Any discussion of the merits of the question as between Wagner and Bizet, the earlier and the later Nietzsche, seems to me out of place, though much has been made of it by those who delight to see a giant turn and rend himself. Nietzsche himself said he was writing for psychologists, and it is not unfair to add that it is less 'Wagner's case' that he presents to us than 'Nietzsche's case.' As to the merits of the case, we may alike admit that Nietzsche's enthusiasm for Wagner was not excessive, and that the pleasant things he said of *Carmen* are fully justified; we may address both the early and the late Nietzsche in the words habitually used by the landlord of the 'Rainbow': 'You're both wrong and you're both right, as I allus says.' Most of the mighty quarrels that have sent men to battle and the stake might have been appeased had each side recognized that both were right in their affirmations, both wrong in their denials.

Nietzsche occupied his chair at Basel for some years longer; in 1880 his health forced him to resign and he was liberally pensioned. As a professor he treated the most difficult questions of Greek study, and devoted his chief attention to his best pupils, who in their turn adored him. Basel is an admirable residence for a cosmopolitan thinker; it was easy for Nietzsche to keep in touch with all that went on from Paris to St. Petersburg. He was also on terms of more or less intimate friendship with the finest spirits in Switzerland, with Keller the novelist, Böcklin the painter, Burckhardt the historian. We are told that he was a man of great personal charm in social intercourse. But his associates at Basel never suspected that in this courteous and amiable professor was stored up an explosive energy which would one day be felt in every civilized land. With pen in hand his criticism of life was unflinching, his sincerity arrogant; when the pen was dropped he became modest, reserved, almost timorous.

The work he produced between 1877 and 1882 seems

to represent the maturity of his genius. It includes *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches, Morgenröthe*, and *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*. In form all these volumes belong to *pensée* literature. They deal with art, with religion, with morals and philosophy, with the relation of all these to life. Nietzsche shows himself in these *pensées* above all a freethinker, emancipated from every law save that of sincerity, wide-ranging, serious, penetrative, often impassioned, as yet always able to follow his own ideal of self-restraint.

After leaving Basel he spent the following nine years chiefly at health resorts and in travelling. We find him at Sorrento, Venice, Genoa, Turin, Sils Maria, as well as at Leipzig. Doubtless his fresh and poignant *pensées* are largely the outcome of strenuous solitary walks in the Engadine or among the Italian lakes. We may assume that during most of these years he was fighting, on the whole successfully fighting, for mental health. Yet passages that occur throughout his books seem to suggest that his thoughts may have sometimes turned to the goal towards which he was tending. It is a mistake, he points out, to suppose that insanity is always the symptom of a degenerating culture, although to nod towards the asylum is a convenient modern way of slaying spiritual tyrants; it is in primitive and developing stages of culture that insanity has played its chief part; only by virtue of what seemed to be the 'divine' turbulence of insanity and epilepsy could any new moral law make progress among early cultures. Just as for us there seems a little madness in all genius, so for them there seemed a little genius in all madness; sorcerers and saints agonized in solitude and abstinence for some gleam of madness which would bring them faith in themselves and openly justify their mission.

What may perhaps be called Nietzsche's third period began in 1883 with *Also sprach Zarathustra*, the most extraordinary of all his works, mystical and oracular in form, but not mystical in substance. *Zarathustra* has only a distant relationship to his prototype Zoroaster,

though Nietzsche had a natural sympathy with the symbolism of fire and water, with the reverence for light and purity, which mark the rites associated with the name of the Bactrian prophet; he has here allowed himself to set forth his own ideas and ideals in the free and oracular manner of all ancient scriptures, and is thus enabled to present his visions in a concrete form. *Zarathustra*, for the first and last time, gave scope to the artist within Nietzsche, and with all its extravagance and imperfection it must remain for good or evil his most personal utterance. It was followed by *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, *Zur Genealogie der Moral*, *Der Fall Wagner*, and *Götzendämmerung*. It is during this period that we trace the growth of the magnification of his own personal mission which finally became a sort of megalomania. ('I have given to men the deepest book they possess, my *Zarathustra*', he wrote towards the end.) In form the books of this period are sometimes less fragmentary than those of the second period; in substance they are marked by their emphatic, often extravagant, almost reckless insistence on certain views of morality. If in the first period he was an apostle of culture, in the second a freethinker, pronouncing judgment on all things in heaven and earth, he was now exclusively a moralist, or, as he would prefer to say, an immoralist. It was during this period that he worked out his 'master morality'—the duty to be strong—in opposition to the 'slave morality' of Christianity, with its glorification of weakness and pity, and that he consistently sought to analyse and destroy the traditional conceptions of good and evil on which our current morality rests. The last work which he planned, but never completed, was a revaluation of all values, *Umwerthung aller Werthe*, which would have been his final indictment of the modern world, and the full statement of his own immoralism and Dionysiac philosophy.

It is sometimes said that Nietzsche's mastery of his thought and style was increasing up to the last. This I can scarcely admit, even as regards style. No doubt

there is at the best a light and swift vigour of movement in these last writings which before he had never attained. He can pour out now a shimmering stream of golden phrases with which he has intoxicated himself, and tries to intoxicate us. We may lend ourselves to the charm, but it has no enduring hold. This master of gay or bitter invective no longer possesses the keenly reasoned and piercing insight of the earlier Nietzsche. We feel that he has become the victim of obsessions which drive him like a leaf before the wind, and all his exuberant wit is unsubstantial and pathetic as that of Falstaff. The devouring flame has at length eaten the core out of the man and his style, leaving only this coruscating shell. And at a touch even this thin shell collapsed into smouldering embers.

From a child Nietzsche was subject to strangely prophetic dreams. In a dream which, when a boy, he put into literary form, he tells how he seemed to be travelling forward amid a glorious landscape, while carolling larks ascended to the clouds, and his whole life seemed to stretch before him in a vista of happy years; 'and suddenly a shrill cry reached our ears; it came from the neighbouring lunatic asylum.' Even in 1876 his friends began to see that Nietzsche attached extraordinary importance to his own work. After he wrote *Zarathustra*, this self-exaltation increased, and began to find expression in his work. Latterly, it is said, he came to regard himself as the incarnation of the genius of humanity. It has always been found a terrible matter to war with the moral system of one's age; it will have its revenge, one way or another, from within or from without, whatever happens after. Nietzsche strove for nothing less than to remodel the moral world after his own heart's desire, and his brain was perishing of exhaustion in the immense effort. In 1889—at the moment when his work at last began to attract attention—he became hopelessly insane. A period of severe hallucinatory delirium led on to complete dementia, and he passes beyond our sight.

## II

Nietzsche was by temperament a philosopher after the manner of the Greeks. In other words, philosophy was not to him, as to the average modern philosopher, a matter of books and the study, but a life to be lived. It seemed to him to have much less concern with 'truth' than with the essentials of fine living. He loved travel and movement, he loved scenery, he loved cities and the spectacle of men; above all, he loved solitude. The solitude of cities drew him strongly; he envied Heraclitus his desert study amid the porticoes and peristyles of the immense temple of Diana. He had, however, his own favourite place of work, to which he often alludes, the Piazza di San Marco at Venice, amid the doves, in front of the strange and beautiful structure which he 'loved, feared, and envied'; and here in the spring, between ten o'clock and midday, he found his best philosophic laboratory.

It was in Italy that Nietzsche seems to have found himself most at home, although there are no signs that he felt any special sympathy with the Italians, that is to say in later than Renaissance days. For the most part he possessed very decided sympathies and antipathies. His antipathy to his own Germans lay in the nature of things. Every prophet's message is primarily directed to his own people. And Nietzsche was unsparing in his keen criticism of the Germans. He tells somewhere with a certain humour how people abroad would ask him if Germany had produced of late no great thinker or artist, no really good book, and how with the courage of despair he would at last reply, 'Yes, Bismarck!' Nietzsche was willing enough to recognize the kind of virtue personified in Bismarck. But with that recognition nearly all was said in favour of Germany that Nietzsche had to say. There is little in the German spirit that answered to his demands. He admired clearness, analytic precision, and highly organized intelligence, light and alert. He saw no sufficient reason why

profundity should lack a fine superficies, nor why strength should be ungainly. His instinctive comparison for a good thinker was always a good dancer. As a child he had been struck by seeing a rope-dancer, and throughout life dancing seemed to him the image of the finest culture, supple to bend, strong to retain its own equilibrium, an exercise demanding the highest training and energy of all the muscles of a well-knit organism. But the indubitable intellectual virtues of the bulky and plodding German are scarcely those which can well be symbolized by an Otero or a Caicedo. 'There is too much beer in the German intellect,' Nietzsche said. For the last ten centuries Germany has wilfully stultified herself; 'nowhere else has there been so vicious a misuse of the two great European narcotics, alcohol and Christianity,' to which he was inclined to add music. ('The theatre and music,' he remarked in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, 'are the haschisch and betel of Europeans, and the history of the so-called higher culture is largely the history of narcotics.') 'Germans regard bad writing,' he said, 'as a national privilege; they do not write prose as one works at a statue, they only improvise.' Even 'German virtue'—and this was the unkindest cut of all—had its origin in eighteenth-century France, as its early preachers, such as Kant and Schiller, fully recognized. Thus it happens that the German has no perceptions—coupling his Goethe with a Schiller, and his Schopenhauer with a Hartmann—and no tact, 'no finger for nuances,' his fingers are all claws. The few persons of high culture whom he had met in Germany, he noted towards the end of his life, and especially Frau Cosima Wagner, were all of French origin. Nietzsche regarded it as merely an accident that he was himself born in Germany, just as it was merely an accident that Heine the Jew, and Schopenhauer the Dutchman, were born there. Yet, as I have already hinted, we may take these utterances too seriously. There are passages in his works—though we meet them rarely—which show that Nietzsche recognized and admired the elemental energy, the depth and the contradictions in the German

character; he attributed them largely to mixture of races.

Nietzsche was not much attracted to the English. It is true that he names Landor as one of the four masters of prose this century has produced, while another of these is Emerson, with whom he had genuine affinity, although his own intellect was keener and more passionate, with less sunny serenity. For Shakespeare, also, his admiration was deep. And when he had outgrown his early enthusiasm for Schopenhauer, the fine qualities which he still recognized in that thinker—his concreteness, lucidity, reasonableness—seemed to him English. He was usually less flattering towards English thought. Darwinism, for instance, he thought, savoured too much of the population question, and was invented by English men of science who were oppressed by the problems of poverty. The struggle for existence, he said, is only an exception in nature; it is exuberance, an even reckless superfluity, which rules. For English philosophic thought generally he had little but contempt. J. S. Mill was one of his 'impossibilities'; the English and French sociologists of to-day, he said, have only known degenerating types of society, devoid of organizing force, and they take their own debased instincts as the standard of social codes in general. Modern democracy, modern utilitarianism, are largely of English manufacture, and he came at last to hate them both. During the past century, he asserted, they have reduced the whole spiritual currency of Europe to a dull plebeian level, and they are the chief causes of European vulgarity. It is the English, he also asserted—George Eliot, for instance—who, while abolishing Christian belief, have sought to bolster up the moral system which was created by Christianity, and which must necessarily fall with it. It is, moreover, the English, who with this democratic and utilitarian plebeianism have seduced and perverted the fine genius of France.

Just as we owe to England the vulgarity which threatens to overspread Europe, so to France we owe

the conception of a habit of nobility, in every best sense of the word. On that point Nietzsche's opinion never wavered. The present subjection of the French spirit to this damnable Anglo-mania, he declared, must never lead us to forget the ardent and passionate energy, the intellectual distinction, which belonged to the France of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>1</sup> The French, as Nietzsche always held, are the one modern European nation which may be compared with the Greeks. In *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches* he names six French writers—Montaigne, La Rochefoucauld, La Bruyère, Fontenelle (in the *Dialogues des Morts*), Vauvenargues, Chamfort—who bring us nearer to Greek antiquity than any other group of modern authors, and contain more real thought than all the books of the German philosophers put together. The only French writer of the present century for whom he cared much (putting aside Mérimée) was Stendhal, who possesses some of the characters of the earlier group. The French, he points out, are the most Christian of all nations, and have produced the greatest saints. He enumerates Pascal ('the first among Christians who was able to unite fervour, intellect, and candour—think of what that means!'), Fénelon, Mme. de Guyon, De Rancé, the founder of the Trappists who have flourished nowhere but in France, the Huguenots, Port-Royal—truly, he exclaims, the great French freethinkers encountered foemen worthy of their steel! The land which produced

<sup>1</sup> One may be allowed to regret that Nietzsche was not equally discriminating in his judgment of our country. Had he not been blinded by the spiritual plebeianism of the nineteenth century in England, he might also have discerned in certain periods some of the same ardent and heroic qualities which he recognized in sixteenth-century France, the more easily since at that time the same Renaissance wave had effected a considerable degree of spiritual union between France and England. In George Chapman, for instance, at his finest and lucidest moments the typical ethical representative of our greatest literary age, Nietzsche would have found a man after his own heart, not only one who scarcely yielded to himself in generous admiration of the great qualities of the French spirit, but a man of 'absolute and full soul' who was almost a precursor of his own 'immoralism,' a lover of freedom, of stoic self-reliance, one who was ever seeking to enlarge the discipline of a fine culture in the direction of moral freedom and dignity.

the most perfect types of anti-Christianity produced also the most perfect types of Christianity. He defends, also, that seeming superficiality which in a great Frenchman, he says, is but the natural epidermis of a rich and deep nature, while a great German's profundity is too often strangely bottled up from the light in a dark and contorted phial.

I have briefly stated Nietzsche's feeling as regards each of the three chief European peoples, because we are thus led up to the central points of his philosophy —his attitude towards modern religion and his attitude towards modern morals. We are often apt to regard these matters as of little practical importance; we think it the reasonable duty of practical social politics to attend to the immediate questions in hand, and leave these wider questions to settle themselves. Rightly or wrongly, that was not how Nietzsche looked at the matter. He was too much of a philosopher, he had too keen a sense of the vital relation of things, to be content with the policy of tinkering society, wherever it seems to need mending most badly, avoiding any reference to the whole. That is our English method, and no doubt it is a very sane and safe method, but, as we have seen, Nietzsche was not in sympathy with English methods. His whole significance lies in the thorough and passionate analysis with which he sought to dissect and to dissolve, first, 'German culture,' then Christianity, and lastly, modern morals, with all that these involve.

It is scarcely necessary to point out, that though Nietzsche rejoiced in the title of freethinker, he can by no means be confounded with the ordinary secularist. He is not bent on destroying religion from any anaesthesia of the religious sense, or even in order to set up some religion of science which is practically no religion at all. He is thus on different ground from the great freethinkers of France, and to some extent of England. Nietzsche was himself of the stuff of which great religious teachers are made, of the race of apostles. So when he writes of the founder of Christianity and the great

Christian types, it is often with a poignant sympathy which the secularist can never know; and if his knife seems keen and cruel, it is not the easy indifferent cruelty of the pachydermatous scoffer. When he analyses the souls of these men and the impulses which have moved them, he knows with what he is dealing: he is analysing his own soul.

A mystic Nietzsche certainly was not; he had no moods of joyous resignation. It is chiefly the religious ecstasy of active moral energy that he was at one with. The sword of the spirit is his weapon rather than the merely defensive breastplate of faith. St. Paul is the consummate type of such religious forces, and whatever Nietzsche wrote of that apostle—the inventor of Christianity, as he truly calls him—is peculiarly interesting. He hates him, indeed, but even his hatred thrills with a tone of intimate sympathy. It is thus in a remarkable passage in *Morgenröthe*, where he tells briefly the history and struggles of that importunate soul, so superstitious and yet so shrewd, without whom there would have been no Christianity. He describes the self-torture of the neurotic, sensual, refined 'Jewish Pascal,' who flagellated himself with the law that he came to hate with the hatred of one who had a genius for hatred; who in one dazzling flash of illumination realized that Jesus by accomplishing the law had annihilated it, and so furnished him with the instrument he desired to wreak his passionate hatred on the law, and to revel in the freedom of his joy. Nietzsche possesses a natural insight in probing the wounds of self-torturing souls. He excels also in describing the effects of extreme pain in chasing away the mists from life, in showing to a man his own naked personality, in bringing us face to face with the cold and terrible fact. It is thus that, coupling the greatest figure in history with the greatest figure in fiction, he compares the pathetic utterance of Jesus on the cross—'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'—with the disillusionment of the dying Don Quixote. Of Jesus himself he speaks no harsh word, but he regarded the atmosphere of Roman decay and

languor—though very favourable for the production of fine personalities—as ill-adapted to the development of a great religion. The Gospels lead us into the atmosphere of a Russian novel, he remarks in one of his last writings, *Der Antichrist*, an atmosphere in which the figure of Jesus had to be coarsened to be understood; it became moulded in men's minds by memories of more familiar types—prophet, Messiah, wonder-worker, judge; the real man they could not even see. 'It must ever be a matter for regret that no Dostoievsky lived in the neighbourhood of this most interesting *décadent*, I mean someone who could understand the entralling charm of just this mixture of the sublime, the morbid, and the child-like.' Jesus, he continues, never denied the world, the state, culture, work; he simply never knew or realized their existence; his own inner experience—'life,' 'light,' 'truth'—was all in all to him. The only realities to him were inner realities, so living that they make one feel 'in Heaven' and 'eternal'; this it was to be 'saved.' And Nietzsche notes, as so many have noted before him, that the fact that men should bow the knee in Christ's name to the very opposite of all these things, and consecrate in the 'Church' all that he threw behind him, is an insoluble example of historical irony. 'Strictly speaking, there has only been one Christian, and he died on the cross. The Gospel *died on the cross*.'

There may seem a savour of contempt in the allusion to Jesus as an 'interesting *décadent*', and undoubtedly there is in *Der Antichrist* a passionate bitterness which is not found in Nietzsche's earlier books. But he habitually used the word *décadent* in a somewhat extended and peculiar sense. The *décadent*, as Nietzsche understood him, was the product of an age in which virility was dead and weakness was sanctified; it was so with the Buddhist as well as with the Christian, they both owe their origin and their progress to 'some monstrous disease of will.' They sprang up among creatures who craved for some 'Thou shalt,' and who were apt only for that one form of energy which the

weak possess, fanaticism. By an instinct which may be regarded as sound by those who do not accept his disparagement of either, Nietzsche always coupled the Christian and the anarchist; to him they were both products of decadence. Both wish to revenge their own discomfort on this present world, he asserted, the anarchist immediately, the Christian at the last day. Instead of feeling, 'I am worth nothing,' the *décadent* says, 'Life is worth nothing'—a terribly contagious state of mind which has covered the world with the vitality of a tropical jungle. It cannot be too often repeated, Nietzsche continues, that Christianity was born of the decay of antiquity, and on the degenerate people of that time it worked like a soothing balm; their eyes and ears were sealed by age and they could no longer understand Epicurus and Epictetus. At such a time purity and beneficence, large promises of future life, worked sweetly and wholesomely. But for fresh young barbarians Christianity is poison. It produces a fundamental enfeeblement of such heroic, childlike, and animal natures as the ancient Germans, and to that enfeeblement, indeed, we owe the revival of classic culture; so that the conclusion of the whole matter is here, as ever, Nietzsche remarks, that 'it is impossible to say whether, in the language of Christianity, God owes more thanks to the Devil, or the Devil to God, for the way in which things have come about.' But in the interaction of the classic spirit and the Christian spirit, Nietzsche's own instincts were not on the side of Christianity, and as the years went on he expresses himself in ever more unmeasured language. He could not take up the *Imitation of Christ*—the very word 'imitation' being, as indeed Michelet had said before, the whole of Christianity—without physical repugnance. And in the *Götzendämmerung* he compared the Bible with the Laws of Manu (though at the same time asserting that it is a sin to name the two books in the same breath): 'The sun lies on the whole book. All those things on which Christianity vents its bottomless vulgarity—procreation, for example, woman, marriage—

are here handled earnestly and reverently, with love and trust. I know no book in which so many tender and gracious things are said about women as in the *Laws of Manu*.' Again in *Der Antichrist*—which represents, I repeat, the unbalanced judgments of his last period—he tells how he turns from Paul with delight to Petronius, a book of which it can be said *è tutto festo*, 'immortally sound, immortally serene.' In the whole New Testament, he adds, there is only one figure we can genuinely honour—that of Pilate.

On the whole, Nietzsche's attitude towards Christianity was one of repulsion and antagonism. At first he appears indifferent, then he becomes calmly judicial, finally he is bitterly hostile. He admits that Christianity possesses the virtues of a cunningly concocted narcotic to soothe the leaden griefs and depressions of men whose souls are physiologically weak. But from first to last there is no sign of any genuine personal sympathy with the religion of the poor in spirit. Epicureanism, the pagan doctrine of salvation, had in it an element of Greek energy, but the Christian doctrine of salvation, he declares, raises its sublime development of hedonism on a thoroughly morbid foundation. Christianity hates the body; the first act of Christian triumph over the Moors, he recalls, was to close the public baths which they had everywhere erected. 'With its contempt for the body Christianity was the greatest misfortune that ever befell humanity.' And at the end of *Der Antichrist* he sums up his concentrated hatred: 'I condemn Christianity; I raise against the Christian Church the most terrible accusation that any accuser has ever uttered. It is to me the most profound of all thinkable corruptions.'

It is scarcely necessary to add that Nietzsche's condemnation of Christianity extended to the Christian God. He even went so far as to assert that it was the development of Christian morality itself—'the father-confessor sensitiveness of the Christian conscience translated and sublimed into a scientific conscience'—which had finally conquered the Christian God. He held that

Polytheism had played an important part in the evolution of culture. Gods, heroes, supernatural beings generally, were inestimable schoolmasters to bring us to the sovereignty of the individual. Polytheism opened up divine horizons of freedom to humanity. 'Ye shall be as gods.' But it has not been so with monotheism. The doctrine of a single God, in whose presence all others were false gods, favours stagnation and unity of type; monotheism has thus perhaps constituted 'the greatest danger which humanity has had to meet in past ages.' Nor are we yet freed from its influence. 'For centuries after Buddha died men showed his shadow in a cave—a vast terrible shadow. God is dead: but thousands of years hence there will probably be caves in which his shadow may yet be seen. And we—we must go on fighting that shadow!' How deeply rooted Nietzsche believed faith in a god to be is shown by the fantastic conclusion to *Zarathustra*. A strange collection of *Uebermenschen*—the men of the future—are gathered together in Zarathustra's cave: two kings, the last of the popes—thrown out of work by the death of God—and many miscellaneous creatures, including a donkey. As Zarathustra returns to his cave he hears the sound of prayer and smells the odour of incense; on entering he finds the *Uebermenschen* on their knees intoning an extraordinary litany to the donkey, who has 'created us all in his own image.'

In his opposition to the Christian faith and the Christian God, Nietzsche by no means stands alone, however independent he may have been in the method and standpoint of his attack. But in his opposition to Christian morality he was more radically original. There is a very general tendency among those who reject Christian theology to shore up the superstructure of Christian morality which rests on that theology. George Eliot, in her writings at all events, has been an eloquent and distinguished advocate of this process; Mr. Myers, in an oft-quoted passage, has described with considerable melodramatic vigour the 'sibyl in the gloom' of the Trinity Fellows' Garden at Cambridge, who withdrew

God and Immortality from his grasp, but, to his consternation, told him to go on obeying Duty. What George Eliot proposed was one of those compromises so dear to our British minds. Nietzsche would none of it. Hence his contemptuous treatment of George Eliot, of J. S. Mill, of Herbert Spencer, and so many more of our favourite intellectual heroes who have striven to preserve Christian morality while denying Christian theology. Nietzsche regarded our current moral ideals, whether formulated by bishops or by anarchists, as alike founded on a Christian basis, and when that foundation is sapped they cannot stand.

The motive of modern morality is pity, its principle is altruistic, its motto is 'Love your neighbour as yourself,' its ideal self-abnegation, its end the greatest good of the greatest number. All these things were abhorrent to Nietzsche, or so far as he accepted them, it was in forms which gave them new values. Modern morality, he said, is founded on an extravagant dread of pain, in ourselves primarily, secondarily in others. Sympathy is fellow-suffering; to love one's neighbour as oneself is to dread his pain as we dread our own pain. The religion of love is built upon the fear of pain. 'On n'est bon que par la pitié'; the acceptance of that doctrine Nietzsche considers the chief outcome of Christianity, although, he thinks, not essential to Christianity, which rested on the egoistic basis of personal salvation: 'One thing is needful.' But it remains the most important by-product of Christianity, and has ever been gaining strength. Spinoza and Kant stood firmly outside the stream, but the French free-thinkers, from Voltaire onwards, were not to be outdone in this direction by Christians, while Comte with his 'Vivre pour autrui' even out-Christianized Christianity, and Schopenhauer in Germany, J. S. Mill in England, carried on the same doctrine. 'The great question of life,' said Benjamin Constant in *Adolphe*—and it is a saying that our finest emotions are quick to echo—'is the pain that we cause.'

Both the sympathetic man and the unsympathetic

man, Nietzsche argues, are egoists. But the unsympathetic man he held to be a more admirable kind of egoist. It is best to win the strength that comes of experience and suffering, and to allow others also to play their own cards and win the same strength, shedding our tears in private, and abhorring soft-heartedness as the foe of all manhood and courage. To call the unsympathetic man 'wicked,' and the sympathetic man 'good,' seemed to Nietzsche a fashion in morals, a fashion which will have its day. He believed he was the first to point out the danger of the prevailing fashion as a sort of moral impressionism, the outcome of the hyperaesthesia peculiar to periods of decadence. Not indeed that Christianity is, or could be, carried out among us to its fullest extent: 'That would be a serious matter. If we were ever to become the object to others of the same stupidities and importunities which they expend on themselves, we should flee wildly as soon as we saw our "neighbour" approach, and curse sympathy as heartily as we now curse egoism.' Our deepest and most personal griefs, Nietzsche remarks elsewhere, remain unrevealed and incomprehensible to nearly all other persons, even to the 'neighbour' who eats out of the same dish with us. And even though my grief should become visible, the dear sympathetic neighbour can know nothing of its complexity and results, of the organic economy of my soul. That my grief may be bound up with my happiness troubles him little. The devotee of the 'religion of pity' will heal my sorrows without a moment's delay; he knows not that the path to my Heaven must lie through my own Hell, that happiness and unhappiness are twin sisters who grow up together, or remain stunted together.

'Morality is the mob-instinct working in the individual.' It rests, Nietzsche asserts, on two thoughts: 'the community is worth more than the individual,' and 'a permanent advantage is better than a temporary advantage'; whence it follows that all the advantages of the community are preferable to those of the individual. Morality thus becomes a string of negative

injunctions, a series of 'Thou shalt nots,' with scarcely a positive command amongst them; witness the well-known table of Jewish commandments. Now Nietzsche could not endure mere negative virtues. He resented the subtle change which has taken place in the very meaning of the word 'virtue,' and which has perverted it from an expression of positive masculine qualities into one of merely negative feminine qualities. In his earliest essay he referred to 'active sin' as the Promethean virtue which distinguishes the Aryans. The only moral codes that commended themselves to him were those that contained positive commands alone: 'Do this! Do it with all your heart, and all your strength, and all your dreams!—and all other things shall be taken away from you!' For if we are truly devoted to the things that are good to do we need trouble ourselves little about the things that are good to leave undone.

Nietzsche compared himself to a mole boring down into the ground and undermining what philosophers have for a couple of thousand years considered the very surest ground to build on—the trust in morals. One of his favourite methods of attack is by the analysis of the 'conscience.' He points out that whatever we were regularly required to do in youth by those we honoured and feared created our 'good conscience.' The dictates of conscience, however urgent, thus have no true validity as regards the person who experiences them. 'But,' someone protests, 'must we not trust our feelings?' 'Yes,' replies Nietzsche, 'trust your feelings, but still remember that the inspiration which springs from feelings is the grandchild of an opinion, often a false one, and in any case not your own. To trust one's feelings—that means to yield more obedience to one's grandfather and grandmother and their grandparents than to the gods within *our own* breasts: our own reason and our own experience.' Faith in authority is thus the source of conscience; it is not the voice of God in the human heart but the voice of man. The sphere of the moral is the sphere of tradition, and a

man is moral because he is dependent on a tradition and not on himself. Originally everything was within the sphere of morals, and it was only possible to escape from that sphere by becoming a law-giver, medicine-man, demigod—that is to say by making morals. To be customary is to be moral—I still closely follow Nietzsche's thought and expression—to be individual is to be wicked. Every kind of originality involves a bad conscience. Nietzsche insists with fine eloquence, again and again, that every good gift that has been given to man put a bad conscience into the heart of the giver. Every good thing was once new, unaccustomed, *immoral*, and gnawed at the vitals of the finder like a worm. Primitive men lived in hordes, and must obey the horde-voice within them. Every new doctrine is wicked. Science has always come into the world with a bad conscience, with the emotions of a criminal, at least of a smuggler. No man can be disobedient to custom and not be immoral, and feel that he is immoral. The artist, the actor, the merchant, the freethinker, the discoverer, were once all criminals, and were persecuted, crushed, rendered morbid, as all persons must be when their virtues are not the virtues idealized by the community. The whole phenomena of morals are animal-like, and have their origin in the search for prey and the avoidance of pursuit.

Progress is thus a gradual emancipation from morals. We have to recognize the services of the men who fight in this struggle against morals, and who are crushed into the ranks of criminals. Not that we need pity them. 'It is a new *justice* that is called for, a new *mot d'ordre*. We need new philosophers. The moral world also is round. The moral world also has its antipodes, and the antipodes also have their right to exist. A new world remains to be discovered—and more than one! Hoist sail, O philosophers!'

'Men must become both better *and wickeder*.' So spake Zarathustra; or, as he elsewhere has it: 'It is with man as with a tree, the higher he would climb into the brightness above, the more vigorously his roots

must strive earthwards, downwards, into the darkness and the depths—into the wicked.' Wickedness is just as indispensable as goodness. It is the ploughshare of wickedness which turns up and fertilizes the exhausted fields of goodness. We must no longer be afraid to be wicked; we must no longer be afraid to be hard. 'Only the noblest things are very hard. This new command, O my brothers, I lay upon you—become hard.'

In renewing our moral ideas we need also to renew our whole conception of the function and value of morals. Nietzsche advises moralists to change their tactics: 'Deny moral values, deprive them of the applause of the crowd, create obstacles to their free circulation; let them be the shame-faced secrets of a few solitary souls; *forbid morality!* In so doing you may perhaps accredit these things among the only men whom one need have on one's side, I mean heroic men. Let it be said of morality to-day as Meister Eckhart said: "I pray God that he may rid me of God!"' We have altogether over-estimated the importance of morality. Christianity knew better when it placed 'grace' above morals, and so also did Buddhism. And if we turn to literature, Nietzsche maintains, it is a vast mistake to suppose that, for instance, great tragedies have, or were intended to have, any moral effect. Look at *Macbeth*, at *Tristan und Isolde*, at *Oedipus*. In all these cases it would have been easy to make guilt the pivot of the drama. But the great poet is in love with passion. 'He calls to us: It is the charm of charms, this exciting, changing, dangerous, gloomy, yet often sun-filled existence! It is an *adventure* to live—take this side or that, it will always be the same!' So he speaks to us out of a restless and vigorous time, half drunken and dazed with excess of blood and energy, out of a wickeder time than ours is; and we are obliged to set to rights the aim of a Shakespeare and make it righteous, that is to say, to misunderstand it.'

We have to recognize a diversity of moral ideals. Nothing is more profoundly dangerous than, with Kant,

to create impersonal categorical imperatives after the Chinese fashion, to generalize 'virtue,' 'duty,' and 'goodness,' and sacrifice them to the Moloch of abstraction. 'Every man must find his own virtue, his own categorical imperative'; it must be founded on inner necessity, on deep personal choice. Only the simpleton says: 'Men ought to be like this or like that.' The real world presents to us a dazzling wealth of types, a prodigious play of forms and metamorphoses. Yet up comes a poor devil of a moralist, and says to us: 'No! men ought to be something quite different!' and straightway he paints a picture of himself on the wall, and exclaims: 'Ecce homo!' But one thing is needful, that a man should attain the fullest satisfaction. Every man must be his own moralist.

These views might be regarded as 'lax,' as predisposing to easy self-indulgence. Nietzsche would have smiled at such a notion. Not yielding, but mastering, was the key to his personal morality. 'Every day is badly spent,' he said, 'in which a man has not once denied himself; this gymnastic is inevitable if a man will retain the joy of being his own master.' The four cardinal virtues, as Nietzsche understood morals, are sincerity, courage, generosity, and courtesy. 'Do what you will,' said Zarathustra, 'but first be one of those who *are able to will*. Love your neighbour as yourself—but first be one of those who *are able to love themselves*.' And again Zarathustra spoke: 'He who belongs to me must be strong of bone and light of foot, eager for fight and for feast, no sulker, no John o' Dreams, as ready for the hardest task as for a feast, sound and hale. The best things belong to me and mine, and if men give us nothing, then we take them: the best food, the purest sky, the strongest thoughts, the fairest women!' There was no desire here to suppress effort and pain. That Nietzsche regarded as a mark of modern Christian morals. It is pain, more pain and deeper, that we need. The discipline of suffering alone creates man's pre-eminence. 'Man unites in himself the creature and the creator: there is in him the stuff of things, the fragmentary and the superfluous, clay, mud, madness,

chaos; but there is also in him the creator, the sculptor, the hardness of the hammer, the divine blessedness of the spectator on the seventh day.' Do you pity, he asks, what must be fashioned, broken, forged, refined as by fire? But our pity is spent on one thing alone, the most effeminate of all weaknesses—pity. This was the source of Nietzsche's admiration for war, and indifference to its horror; he regarded it as the symbol of that spiritual warfare and bloodshed in which to him all human progress consisted. He might, had he pleased, have said with the Jew and the Christian, that without shedding of blood there shall be no remission of sins. But with a difference, for as he looked at the matter, every man must be his own saviour, and it is his own blood that must be shed; there is no salvation by proxy. That was expressed in his favourite motto: *Virescit vulnere virtus*.

Nietzsche's ideal man is the man of Epictetus, as he describes him in *Morgenröthe*, the laconic, brave, self-contained man, not lusting after expression like the modern idealist. The man whom Epictetus loved hated fanaticism, he hated notoriety, he knew how to smile. And the best was, added Nietzsche, that he had no fear of God before his eyes; he believed firmly in reason, and relied, not on divine grace, but on himself. Of all Shakespeare's plays *Julius Caesar* seemed to Nietzsche the greatest, because it glorifies Brutus; the finest thing that can be said in Shakespeare's honour, Nietzsche thought, was that—aided perhaps by some secret and intimate experience—he believed in Brutus and the virtues that Brutus personified. In course of time, however, while not losing his sympathy with Stoicism, it was Epicureanism, the heroic aspects of Epicureanism, which chiefly appealed to Nietzsche. He regarded Epicurus as one of the world's greatest men, the discoverer of the heroically idyllic method of living a philosophy; for one to whom happiness could never be more than an unending self-discipline, and whose ideal of life had ever been that of a spiritual nomad, the methods of Epicurus seemed to yield the finest secrets of good living. Socrates, with his joy in life and in

himself, was also an object of Nietzsche's admiration. Among later thinkers, Helvetius appealed to him strongly. Goethe and Napoleon were naturally among his favourite heroes, as were Alcibiades and Caesar. The latest great age of heroes was to him the Italian Renaissance. Then came Luther, opposing the rights of the peasants, yet himself initiating a peasants' revolt of the intellect, and preparing the way for that shallow plebeianism of the spirit which has marked the last two centuries.

Latterly, in tracing the genealogy of modern morals, Nietzsche's opinions hardened into a formula. He recognized three stages of moral evolution: first, the *pre-moral* period of primitive times, when the beast of prey was the model of conduct, and the worth of an action was judged by its results. Then came the *moral* period, when the worth of an action was judged not by its results, but by its origin; this period has been the triumph of what Nietzsche calls slave-morality, the morality of the mob; the goodness and badness of actions is determined by atavism, at best by survivals; every man is occupied in laying down laws for his neighbour instead of for himself, and all are tamed and chastised into weakness in order that they may be able to obey these prescriptions. Nietzsche ingeniously connected his slave-morality with the accepted fact that for many centuries the large, fair-haired aristocratic race has been dying out in Europe, and the older down-trodden race—short, dark, and broad-headed—has been slowly gaining predominance. But now we stand at the threshold of the *extra-moral* period. Slave-morality, Nietzsche asserted, is about to give way to master-morality; the lion will take the place of the camel. The instincts of life, refusing to allow that anything is forbidden, will again assert themselves, sweeping away the feeble negative democratic morality of our time. The day has now come for the man who is able to rule himself, and who will be tolerant to others not out of his weakness, but out of his strength; to him nothing is forbidden, for he has passed beyond goodness and beyond wickedness.

## III

So far I have attempted to follow with little or no comment what seems to me the main current of Nietzsche's thought. It may be admitted that there is some question as to which is the main current. For my own part I have no hesitation in asserting that it is the current which expands to its fullest extent between 1876 and 1883 in what I term Nietzsche's second or middle period; up to then he had not gained complete individuality; afterwards began the period of uncontrolled aberrations. Thus I am inclined to pass lightly over the third period, during which the conception of 'master-morality' attained its chief and most rigid emphasis, although I gather that to Nietzsche's disciples as to his foes that conception seems of primary importance. This idea of 'master-morality' is in fact a solid fossilized chunk, easy to handle for friendly or unfriendly hands. The earlier and more living work—the work of the man who truly said that it is with thinkers as with snakes: those that cannot shed their skins die—is less obviously tangible. So the 'master-morality' it is that your true Nietzschean is most likely to close his fist over. It would be unkind to say more, for Nietzsche himself has been careful to scatter through his works, on the subject of disciples and followers generally, very scathing remarks which must be sufficiently painful to any faithful Nietzschean.

We are helped in understanding Nietzsche's philosophic significance if we understand his precise ideal. The psychological analysis of every great thinker's work seems to reveal some underlying fundamental image or thought—often enough simple and homely in character—which he has carried with him into the most abstract regions. Thus Fraser has found good reason to suppose that Hegel's main ideas were suggested by the then recent discovery of galvanism. In Nietzsche's case this key is to be found in the persistent image of an attitude. As a child, his sister tells us, he had been greatly impressed by a rope-dancer who had performed his feats

over the market-place at Naumburg, and throughout his work, as soon as he had attained to real self-expression, we may trace the image of the dancer. 'I do not know,' he somewhere says, 'what the mind of a philosopher need desire more than to be a good dancer. For dancing is his ideal, his art also, indeed his only piety, his "divine worship.'" In all Nietzsche's best work we are conscious of this ideal of the dancer, strong, supple, vigorous, yet harmonious and well-balanced. It is the dance of the athlete and the acrobat rather than the make-believe of the ball-room, and behind the easy equipoise of such dancing lie patient training and effort. The chief character of good dancing is its union of the maximum of energetic movement with the maximum of well-balanced grace. The whole muscular system is alive to restrain any excess, so that however wild and free the movement may seem it is always measured; excess would mean ignominious collapse. When in his later years Nietzsche began, as he said, to 'philosophize with the hammer,' and to lay about him savagely at every hollow 'idol' within reach, he departed from his better ideal of dancing, and his thinking became intemperate, reckless, desperate.

Nietzsche had no system, probably because the idea that dominated his thought was an image, and not a formula, the usual obsession of philosophers, such as may be clapped on the universe at any desired point. He remarks in one place that a philosopher believes the worth of his philosophy to lie in the structure, but that what we ultimately value are the finely carven and separate stones with which he builded, and he was clearly anxious to supply the elaborated stones direct. In time he came to call himself a realist, using the term, in no philosophic sense, to indicate his reverence for the real and essential facts of life, the things that conduce to fine living. He desired to detach the 'bad conscience' from the things that are merely wicked traditionally, and to attach it to the things that are anti-natural, anti-instinctive, anti-sensuous. He sought to inculcate veneration for the deep-lying sources of

life, to take us down to the bed-rock of life, the rock whence we are hewn. He held that man, as a reality, with all his courage and cunning, is himself worthy of honour, but that man's ideals are absurd and morbid, the mere dregs in the drained cup of life; or, as he eventually said—and it is a saying which will doubtless seal his fate in the minds of many estimable persons—man's ideals are his only *partie honteuse*, of which we may avoid any close examination. Nietzsche's 'realism' was thus simply a vigorous hatred of all dreaming that tends to depreciate the value of life, and a vivid sense that man himself is the *ens realissimum*.

A noteworthy point in Nietzsche's conception of philosophy is his increasingly clear conception of its fundamentally psychological character. I mean to say that Nietzsche knows that a man's philosophy, to be real, must be the inevitable outcome of his own psychic constitution. It is a point that philosophers have never seen. Perhaps Nietzsche was the first, however hesitatingly, to realize it. It is only in the recognition of this fact that the eirenicon of philosophies—and one might add, of religions — can ever be found. The philosopher of old said: 'This is *my* conception of the universe'; it was well. But he was apt to add: 'It is *the* conception of the universe,' and so put himself hopelessly in the wrong. It is as undignified to think another man's philosophy as to wear another man's cast-off clothes. Only the poor in spirit or in purse can find any satisfaction in doing either. A philosophy or religion can only fit the man for whom it was made. 'There has only been one Christian,' as Nietzsche put it, 'and he died on the cross.' But why waste energy in trying to manufacture a second Christian? We may be very sure that we can never find another Christian whom Christianity would fit so admirably as it once fitted Christ. Why not rest content with Christ? Let Brown be a Brownite and Robinson a Robinsonian. It is not good that they should exchange their philosophies, or that either should insist on thrusting his threadbare misfits on Jones, who prefers to be meta-

physically naked. When men have generally begun to realize this the world will be a richer and an honester world, and a pleasanter one as well. That Nietzsche had vaguely begun to realize it seems to me his chief claim to distinction in the purely philosophic field.

To recognize the free and direct but disconnected nature of Nietzsche's many-sided vision of the world is to lessen the force of his own antagonisms as well as of the antagonisms he has excited. Much of Nietzsche's work, especially in the third period, is the utterance of profound half-truths, keenly and personally felt, but still half-truths of which he has himself elsewhere supplied the complements. The reason is that during that period he was not so much expressing himself as appealing passionately against himself to those failing forces whose tonic influence he thirsted after. The hardness, the keen sword, the reckless energy he idealized were the things that had slipped utterly away and left him defenceless to the world. He grew to worship cruel strength as the consumptive Keats, the sickly Thoreau, loved beauty and health, with 'the desire of the moth for the star.' Such an attitude has its rightness and power, so long as we understand it, though it comes short of the serenity of the greatest spirits who seek, like Goethe, to live at each moment in the whole. The master-morality of Nietzsche's later days, on which friends and foes have alike insisted, is a case in point. This appears to have been hailed, or resented, as a death-blow struck at the modern democratic regime. To take a broad view of Nietzsche's philosophic attitude is to realize that both views are alike out of place. On this matter, as on many others, Nietzsche moved in a line which led him to face an opposite direction in his decay from that which he faced in his immaturity. He began by regarding democracy as the standard of righteousness, and ended by asserting that the world only exists for the production of a few great men. It would be foolish to regard either of the termini as the last outpost of wisdom. But in the passage between these two points many excellent things are said by the

the way. Nietzsche was never enamoured of socialism or democracy for its own sake; reasonably enough, he will not even admit that we have yet attained democracy; though the horses, indeed, are new, as yet 'the roads are the same old roads, the wheels the same old wheels.' But he points out that the value of democracy lies in its guarantee of individual freedom: Cyclopean walls are being built, with much toil and dust, but the walls will be a rampart against any invasion of barbarians or any new slavery, against the despotism of capital and the despotism of party. The workers may regard the walls as an end in themselves; we are free to value them for the fine flowers of culture which will grow in the gardens they enclose. To me, at least, this attitude of Nietzsche's maturity seems the ample justification of democracy.

Nietzsche was not, however, greatly interested in questions of government; he was far more deeply interested in questions of morals. In his treatment of morals—no doubt chiefly in the last period—there is a certain element of paradox. It must again be pointed out that this is to be explained by the organic demands of Nietzsche's own nature. In attacking the excessive tendency to sympathy which he seemed to see around him he was hygienically defending himself from his own excessive sympathy. His sister quotes with a smile the declaration that his Paradise lay beneath the shadow of his sword; we scarcely need her assurance of his tender-hearted sensitiveness. He could attack relentlessly, but he never attacked a person save as the symbol of what he regarded as a false principle held in undeserved honour. When he realized that the subject of such attack was really a living person he was full of remorse. He attacked Strauss because Strauss was the successful representative of a narrow ideal of culture; a few months later Strauss died, having, it now appears, borne the onset philosophically enough, and Nietzsche was full of grief lest he had embittered the dying man's last hours. It was because he had himself suffered from the excesses of his own sympathy that he

was able so keenly to analyse the secrets of sympathy. He spoke as the Spanish poet says that every poet—and indeed every seer—must always speak, *por la boca de su herida*, through the mouth of his wound. That is why his voice is often so poignantly intimate; it is also why we sometimes find this falsetto note of paradox. In his last period, Nietzsche grows altogether impatient of morals, calls himself an immoralist, fervently exhorts us to become wickeder. But if any young disciple came to the teacher asking, 'What must I do to become wickeder?' it does not appear that Nietzsche bade him to steal, bear false witness, commit adultery, or do any other of the familiar and commonly-accepted wickednesses. Nietzsche preached wickedness with the same solemn exaltation that Carducci lauded Satan. What he desired was far indeed from any rehabilitation of easy vice; it was the justification of neglected and unsanctified virtues.

At the same time, and while Nietzsche's immoralist is just as austere a person as the mere moralists who have haunted the world for many thousand years, it is clear that Nietzsche wished strictly to limit the sphere of morals. He never fails to point out how large a region of life and art lies legitimately outside the moral jurisdiction. In an age in which many moralists desire to force morals into every part of life and art—and even assume a certain air of virtue in so doing—the 'immoralist' who lawfully vindicates any region for free cultivation is engaged in a proper and wholesome task.

No doubt, however, there will be some to question the value of such a task. Nietzsche the immoralist can scarcely be welcome in every camp, although he remains always a force to be reckoned with. The same may be said of Nietzsche the freethinker. He was, perhaps, the typical freethinker of the age that comes after Renan. Nietzsche had nothing of Renan's genial scepticism and smiling disillusionment; he was less tender to human weakness, for all his long Christian ancestry less Christian, than the Breton seminarist remained to the last. He seems to have shaken himself altogether

free of Christianity—so free, that except in his last period he even speaks of it without bitterness—though by no means wholly untouched by that nostalgia of the cloister which now and then pursues even those of us who are farthest from any faith in Christian dogma. He never sought, as among ourselves Pater sought, the germ of Christianity in things pagan, the undying essence of paganism in things Christian. Heathen as he was, I do not think even Heine's visions of the gods in exile could have touched him; he never felt the charm of fading and faded things. It is remarkable. It is scarcely less remarkable that, far as he was from Christianity, he was equally far from what we usually call 'paganism,' the pasteboard paganism of easy self-indulgence and cheerful irresponsibility. It was not so that he understood Hellenism. Matthew Arnold once remarked that the Greeks were never sick or sad. Nietzsche knew better. The greater part of Greek literature bears witness that the Hellenes were for ever wrestling with the problems of pain. And none who came after have more poignantly uttered the pangs of human affairs, or more sweetly the consolations of those pangs, than the great disciples of the Greeks who created the Roman world. The classic world of nymphs and fauns is an invention of the moderns. The real classic world, like the modern world, was a world of suffering. The difference lay in the method of facing that suffering. Nietzsche chose the classic method from no desire to sport with Amaryllis in the shade, but because he had known forms of torture for which the mild complacencies of modern faith seemed to offer no relief. If we must regard Nietzsche as a pagan, it is as the Pascal of paganism. The freethinker, it is true, was more cheerful and hopeful than the believer, but there is the same tragic sincerity, the same restless self-torment, the same sense of the abyss.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pater's description of the transition we may trace from the easy prose of Pascal's first book to the 'perpetual *agonia*' of his later work, applies with scarcely a change to the similar transition in Nietzsche: 'Everywhere in the *Letters* he had seemed so great a master—a master of himself—never at a loss, taking the conflict so lightly, with so light

There still remains Nietzsche, the apostle of culture, the philosopher engaged in the criticism of life. From first to last, wherever you open his books, you light on sayings that cut to the core of the questions that every modern thinking man must face. I take, almost at random, a few passages from a single book: of convictions he writes that 'a man possesses opinions as he possesses fish, in so far as he owns a fishing-net; a man must go fishing and be lucky, then he has his own fish, his own opinions; I speak of living opinions, living fish. Some men are content to possess fossils in their cabinets—and convictions in their heads.' Of the problem of the relation of science to culture he says well: 'The best and wholesomest thing in science, as in mountains, is the air that blows there. It is because of that air that we spiritual weaklings avoid and defame science'; and he points out that the work of science—with its need for sincerity, infinite patience, complete self-abnegation—calls for men of nobler make than poetry needs. When we have learnt to trust science and to learn from it, then it will be possible so to tell natural history that 'every one who hears it is inspired to health and gladness as the heir and continuer of humanity.' This is how he rebukes those foolish persons who grow impatient with critics: 'Remember that critics are insects who only sting to live and not to hurt: they want our blood and not our pain.' And he utters this wise saying, himself forgetting it in later years: 'Growth in wisdom may be exactly measured by decrease in bitterness.' Nietzsche desires to prove nothing, and is reckless of consistency. He looks at every question that comes before him with the same simple, intent, penetrative gaze, and whether the aspects that he reveals are new or old, he seldom fails to bring us a fresh stimulus. Culture, as he understood it, consists for the

a heart: in the great Atlantean travail of the *Thoughts* his feet sometimes "are almost gone." In his soul's agony theological abstractions seem to become personal powers. . . . In truth, into his typical diagnosis, as it may seem, of the tragedy of the human soul, there have passed not merely the personal feelings, the temperament of an individual, but his malady also, a physical malady.'

modern man in the task of choosing the simple and indispensable things from the chaos of crude material which to-day overwhelms us. The man who will live at the level of the culture of his time is like the juggler who must keep a number of plates spinning in the air; his life must be a constant training in suppleness and skill so that he may be a good athlete. But he is also called on to exert his skill in the selection and limitation of his task. Nietzsche is greatly occupied with the simplification of culture. Our suppleness and skill must be exercised alone on the things that are vital, essential, primitive; the rest may be thrown aside. He is for ever challenging the multifarious materials for culture, testing them with eye and hand; we cannot prove them too severely, he seems to say, nor cast aside too contemptuously the things that a real man has no need of for fine living. What must I do to be saved? What do I need for the best and fullest life?—that is the everlasting question that the teacher of life is called upon to answer. And we cannot be too grateful to Nietzsche for the stern penetration—the more acute for his ever-present sense of the limits of energy—with which he points from amid the mass to the things which most surely belong to our eternal peace.

Nietzsche's style has often been praised. The style was certainly the man. There can be little doubt, moreover, that there is scarcely any other German style to compare with it, though such eminence means far less in a country where style has rarely been cultivated than it would mean in France or even England. Sallust awoke his sense for style, and may account for some characteristics of his style. He also enthusiastically admired Horace as the writer who had produced the maximum of energy with the minimum of material. A concentrated Roman style, significant and weighty at every point, *aere perennius*, was always his ideal. Certainly the philologist's aptitudes helped here to teach him the value and force of words, as jewels for the goldsmith to work with, and not as mere worn-out counters to slip through the fingers. One may call it

a muscular style, a style wrought with the skilful strength of hand and arm. It scarcely appeals to the ear. It lacks the restful simplicity of the greatest masters, the plangent melody, the seemingly unconscious magic quivering along our finest-fibred nerves. Such effects we seem to hear now and again in Schopenhauer, but rarely or never from any other German. This style is titanic rather than divine, but the titanic virtues it certainly possesses in fullest measure: robust and well-tempered vigour, concentration, wonderful plastic force in moulding expression. It becomes over-emphatic at last. When Nietzsche threw aside the dancer's ideal in order to 'philosophize with the hammer,' the result on his style was as disastrous as on his thought; both alike took on the violent and graceless character of the same implement. He speaks indeed of the virtue of hitting a nail on the head, but it is a less skilled form of virtue than good dancing.

Whether he was dancing or hammering, however, Nietzsche certainly converted the whole of himself into his work, as in his view every philosopher is bound to do, 'for just that art of transformation *is* philosophy.' That he was entirely successful in being a 'real man,' one may doubt. His excessive sensitiveness to the commonplace in life, and his deficiency in the sexual instinct—however highly he may have rated the importance of sex in life—largely cut him off from true fellowship with the men who are most 'real' to us. He was less tolerant and less humane than his master Goethe; his incisive insight, and, in many respects, better intellectual equipment, are more than compensated by this lack of breadth. But, as his friend the historian Burckhardt has said, he worked mightily for the increase of independence in the world. Every man, indeed, works with the limitations of his qualities, just as we all struggle beneath the weight of the superincumbent atmosphere; our defects are even a part of our qualities, and it would be foolish to quarrel with them. Nietzsche succeeded in being himself, and it was a finely rare success. Whether he was a 'real man' matters less. With passionate sincerity he expressed

his real self and his best self, abhorring, on the one hand, what with Voltaire and Verlaine he called 'literature,' and, on the other, all that mere indigested material, the result of mental dyspepsia, of which he regarded Carlyle as the supreme warning. A man's real self, as he repeated so often, consists of the things which he has truly digested and assimilated; he must always 'conquer' his opinions; it is only such conquests which he has the right to report to men as his own. His thoughts are born of his pain; he has imparted to them of his own blood, his own pleasure and torment. Nietzsche himself held that suffering and even disease are almost indispensable to the philosopher; great pain is the final emancipator of the spirit, those great slow pains that take their time, and burn us up like green wood. 'I doubt whether such pain betters us,' he remarks, 'but I know that it deepens us.' That is the stuff of Nietzsche's Hellenism, as expressed in the most light-hearted of his books. *Virescit vulnere virtus.* It is that which makes him, when all is said, a great critic of life.

It is a consolation to many—I have seen it so stated in a respectable review—that Nietzsche went mad. No doubt also it was once a consolation to many that Socrates was poisoned, that Jesus was crucified, that Bruno was burnt. But hemlock and the cross and the stake proved sorry weapons against the might of ideas even in those days, and there is no reason to suppose that a doctor's certificate will be more effectual in our own. Of old time we killed our great men as soon as their visionary claims became inconvenient; now, in our mercy, we leave the tragedy of genius to unroll itself to the bitter close. The devils to whom the modern Faustus is committed have waxed cunning with the ages. Nietzsche has met, in its most relentless form, the fate of Pascal and Swift and Rousseau. That fact may carry what weight it will in any final estimate of his place as a moral teacher: it cannot touch his position as an aboriginal force. He remains in the first rank of the distinguished and significant personalities our century has produced.

## CASANOVA

THERE are few more delightful books in the world than Casanova's *Mémoires*.—That is a statement I have long vainly sought to see in print. It is true, one learns casually that various eminent literary personages have cherished a high regard for this autobiography, have even considered it the ideal autobiography, that Wendell Holmes was once heard defending Casanova, that Thackeray found him good enough to steal from. But these eminent personages—and how many more we shall never know—locked up the secret of their admiration for this book in some remote casket of their breasts; they never confided it to the cynical world. Every properly constituted 'man of letters' has always recognized that any public allusion to Casanova should begin and end with lofty moral reprobation of his unspeakable turpitude.

No doubt whatever—and this apart from the question as to whether his autobiography should be counted as moral or immoral literature—Casanova delivered himself bound into the hands of the moralists. He recognized this; his autobiography, as he himself truly said, was 'a confession, if ever there was one.' But he wrote at the end of a long and full life, in the friendly seclusion of a lonely Bohemian castle, when all things had become indifferent to him save the vivid memories of the past. It mattered little to him that the whirlwind of 1789 had just swept away the eighteenth century together with the moral maxims that passed current in that century. We have to accept these facts at the outset when we approach Casanova. And if a dweller in the highly respectable nineteenth century may be forgiven a first exclamation of horror at Casanova's wickedness, he has woefully failed in critical insight if he allows that exclamation to be his last word concerning these *Mémoires*.

There are at least three points of view from which Casanova's *Mémoires* are of deep and permanent interest. In the first place they constitute an important psychological document as the full and veracious presentation of a certain human type in its most complete development. In the second place, as a mere story of adventure and without reference to their veracity, the *Mémoires* have never been surpassed, and only equalled by books written on a much smaller scale. In the third place, we here possess an unrivalled picture of the eighteenth century in its most characteristic aspects throughout Europe.

## I

Casanova lived in an age which seems to have been favourable to the spontaneous revelation of human nature in literature. It was not only the age in which the novel reached full development; it was the age of diaries and autobiographies. Pepys, indeed, though he died in the eighteenth century, had written his diary long before; but during Casanova's lifetime Boswell was writing that biography which is so wonderful largely because it is so nearly an autobiography. Casanova's communicative countryman, Gozzi, was also his contemporary. Rousseau's *Confessions* only preceded Casanova's *Mémoires* by a few years, and a little later Restif de la Bretonne wrote *Monsieur Nicolas*, and Madame Roland her *Mémoires Particulières*. All these autobiographies are very unlike Casanova's. They mostly seem to present the shady sides of otherwise eminent and respectable lives. The highly-placed government official of versatile intellectual tastes exhibits himself as a monster of petty weaknesses; the eloquent apostle of the return to Nature uncovers the corroding morbidities we should else never suspect; the philanthropic pioneer in social reform exposes himself in a state of almost maniacal eroticism; the austere heroine who was nourished on Plutarch confesses that she is the victim of unhappy passion. We are conscious of no such dis cords in Casanova's autobiography. Partly it may be

because we have no other picture of Casanova before our eyes. Moreover, he had no conventional ideals to fall short of; he was an adventurer from the first. 'I am proud because I am nothing,' he used to say. He could not boast of his birth; he never held high position; for the greatest part of his active career he was an exile; at every moment of his life he was forced to rely on his own real and personal qualities. But the chief reason why we feel no disturbing discord in Casanova's *Mémoires* lies in the admirable skill with which he has therein exploited his unquestionable sincerity. He is a consummate master in the dignified narration of undignified experiences. Fortified, it is true, by a confessed and excessive *amour-propre*, he never loses his fine sense of equilibrium, his power of presenting his own personality broadly and harmoniously. He has done a few dubious things in his time, he seems to say, and now and again found himself in positions that were ridiculous enough; but as he looks back he feels that the like may have happened to any of us. He views these things with complete human tolerance as a necessary part of the whole picture, which it would be idle to slur over or apologize for. He records them simply, not without a sense of humour, but with no undue sense of shame. In his heart, perhaps, he is confident that he has given the world one of its greatest books, and that posterity will require of him no such rhetorical justification as Rousseau placed at the head of his *Confessions*.

In the preface to the *Mémoires*, Casanova is sufficiently frank. He has not scrupled, he tells us, to defraud fools and rascals, 'when necessary,' and he has never regretted it. But such incidents have been but episodes in his life. He is not a sensualist, he says, for he has never neglected his duty—'when I had any'—for the allurements of sense; yet the main business of his life has ever been in the world of sense; 'there is none of greater importance.' 'I have always loved women and have done my best to make them love me. I have also delighted in good cheer, and I have passionately followed

whatever has excited my curiosity.' Now in old age he reviews the joys of his life. He has learnt to be content with one meal a day, in spite of a sound digestion, but he recalls the dishes that delighted him: Neapolitan macaroni, Spanish olla podrida, Newfoundland cod, high-flavoured game, old cheese (has he not collected material for a *Dictionnaire des Fromages?*), and without any consciousness of abrupt transition he passes on to speak of the fragrant sweetness of the women he had loved. Then with a smile of pity he turns on those who call such tastes depraved, the poor insensate fools who think the Almighty is only able to enjoy our sorrow and abstinence, and bestows upon us for naught the gift of self-respect, the love of praise, the desire to excel, energy, strength, courage, and the power to kill ourselves when we will. And with the strain of Stoicism which is ever present to give fibre to his Epicureanism, he quotes the maxim which might well belong to both philosophies: 'Nemo laeditur nisi a seipso.'

The fact that Casanova was on one side a Venetian must count for something in any attempt to explain him. Not indeed that Venice ever produced more than one Casanova; I would imply no such disrespect to Venice—or to Casanova—but the racial soil was favourable to such a personality. The Venetians are a branch of a more northern people who long since settled by the southern sea to grow mellow in the sunshine. It suited them well, for they expanded into one of the finest races in Christendom, and certainly one of the least Christian races there, a solid, well-tempered race, self-controlled and self-respecting. The Venetian genius is the genius of sensuous enjoyment, of tolerant humanity, of unashamed earthliness. Whatever was sane and stable in Casanova, and his instinctive distaste for the morbid and perverse, he owes to his Venetian maternal ancestry. If it is true that he was not a mere sensualist, it was by no means because of his devotion to duty—'when I had any'—but because the genuine sensualist is only alive on the passive side of his nature, and in

Casanova's nervous system the development of the sensory fibres is compensated and held in balance by the equal vigour of the motor fibres; what he is quick to enjoy he is strong and alert to achieve. Thus he lived the full and varied life that he created for himself at his own good pleasure out of nothing, by the sole power of his own magnificent wits. And now the self-sufficing Venetian sits down to survey his work and finds that it is good. It has not always been found so since. A 'self-made' man, if ever there was one, Casanova is not revered by those who worship self-help. The record of his life will easily outlive the largest fortune ever made in any counting-house, but the life itself remains what we call a 'wasted' life. Thrift, prudence, modesty, scrupulous integrity, strict attention to business—it is useless to come to Casanova for any of these virtues. They were not even in his blood; he was only half Venetian.

The Casanova family was originally Spanish. The first Casanova on record was a certain Don Jacobo, of illegitimate birth, who in the middle of the fifteenth century became secretary to King Alfonso. He fell in love with a lady destined to the religious life, and the day after she had pronounced her vows he carried her off from her convent to Rome, where he finally obtained the forgiveness and benediction of the Pope. The son of this union, Don Juan, killed an officer of the King of Naples, fled from Rome, and sought fortune with Columbus, dying on the voyage. Don Juan's son, Marcantonio, secretary to a cardinal, was noted in his day as an epigrammatic poet; but his satire was too keen, and he also had to flee from Rome. His son became a colonel, and, unlike his forefathers, died peacefully, in extreme old age, in France. In this soldier's grandson, Casanova's father, the adventurous impulsiveness of the family again came out; he ran away from home at nineteen with a young actress, and himself became an actor; subsequently he left the actress and then fell in love with a young Venetian beauty of sixteen, Zanetta Farusi, a shoemaker's

daughter. But a mere actor could find no favour in a respectable family, so the young couple ran away and were married; the hero of these *Mémoires*, born on the 2nd April 1725, was their first-born. There is probably no reason to doubt the substantial accuracy of this family history, but if one desired to invent an ancestry for Casanova he could scarcely better it.

His race helps to account for Casanova, but the real explanation of the man can only lie in his own congenital organization. That he was a radically abnormal person is fairly clear. Not that he was morbid either in body or mind. On the contrary, he was a man of fine presence, of abounding health—always looking ten years younger than his age—of the most robust appetites, a great eater, who delighted to see others, especially women, eat heartily also, a man of indubitable sexual vigour; however great the demands he made upon his physical energy it seldom failed to respond, and his capacity for rest was equally great; he could sleep nineteen hours at a stretch. His mental health was not less sound. The most punctilious alienist, with this frank and copious history before him, could not commit Casanova to an asylum. Whatever offences against social codes he may have committed, Casanova can scarcely be said to have sinned against natural laws. He was only abnormal because so natural a person within the gates of civilization is necessarily abnormal and at war with his environment. Far from being the victim of morbidities and perversities, Casanova presents to us the natural man *in excelsis*. He was a man for whom the external world existed, and who reacted to all the stimuli it presents to the healthy normal organism. His intelligence was immensely keen and alert, his resourcefulness, his sagacious audacity, his presence of mind, were all of the first order. He was equally swift to feel, to conceive, and to act. His mental organization was thus singularly harmonious, and hence his success in gratifying his eager and immense appetite for the world, an appetite unsatiated and insatiable even to the last, or he would have found no

pleasure in writing these *Mémoires*. Casanova has been described as a psychological type of instability. That is to view him superficially. A man who adapts himself so readily and so effectively to any change in his environment or in his desires only exhibits the instability which marks the most intensely vital organisms. The energy and ability which Casanova displayed in gratifying his instincts would have sufficed to make a reputation of the first importance in any department, as a popular statesman, a great judge, a merchant prince, and enabled him to die worn out by the monotonous and feverish toil of the senate, the court, or the counting-house. Casanova chose to *live*. A crude and barbarous choice it seems to us, with our hereditary instinct to spend our lives in wasting the reasons for living. But it is certain that Casanova never repented his choice. Assuredly we need not, for few judges, statesmen, or merchants have ever left for the joy of humanity any legacy of their toil equal to these *Mémoires*.

But such swift energy of vital action and reaction, such ardour of deed in keeping pace with desire, are in themselves scarcely normal. Casanova's abnormality is suggested by the tendency to abnormality which we find in his family. We have seen what men his ancestors were; in reading the *Mémoires* we gather incidentally that one of his brothers had married, though impotent, and another brother is described as a somewhat feeble-minded ne'er-do-well. All the physical and mental potency of the family was intensely concentrated in Casanova. Yet he himself in early childhood seems to have been little better than an idiot either in body or mind. He could recall nothing that happened before he was eight years of age. He was not expected to live; he suffered from prolonged haemorrhages from the nose, and the vision of blood was his earliest memory. As a child he habitually kept his mouth open, and his face was stupid. 'Thickness of the blood,' said the physicians of those days; it seems probable that he suffered from growths in the nose which, as we now know, produce such physical and mental inferiority as

Casanova describes. The cure was spontaneous. He was taken to Padua, and shortly afterwards began to develop wonderfully both in stature and intelligence. In after years he had little cause to complain either of health or intellect. It is notable, however, that when, still a boy, he commenced his ecclesiastical training (against his wishes, for he had chosen to be a doctor), he failed miserably as a preacher, and broke down in the pulpit; thus the Church lost a strange ornament. Moreover, with all his swift sensation and alert response, there was in Casanova an anomalous dullness of moral sensibility. The insults to Holy Religion which seem to have brought him to that prison from which he effected his marvellous escape, were scarcely the serious protests of a convinced heretic; his deliberate trickery of Mme d'Urfé was not only criminal but cruel. His sense of the bonds of society was always somewhat veiled, and although the veil never became thick, and might be called the natural result of an adventurer's life, one might also, perhaps, maintain that it was a certain degree of what is sometimes called moral imbecility that made Casanova an adventurer. But while we thus have to recognize that he was a man of dulled moral sensibility, we must also recognize that he possessed a vigorous moral consciousness of his own, or we misunderstand him altogether. The point to be remembered is that the threshold of his moral sensibility was not easily reached. There are some people whose tactile sensibility is so obtuse that it requires a very wide separation of the aesthesiometer to get the right response. It was so with Casanova's moral sensitiveness. But, once aroused, his conscience responded energetically enough. It seems doubtful whether, from his own point of view, he ever fell into grave sin, and therefore he is happily free from remorse. No great credit is thus due to him; the same psychological characteristic is familiar in all criminals. It is not difficult to avoid plucking the apples of shame when so singularly few grow on your tree.

Casanova's moral sensibility and its limits come out,

where a man's moral sensibility will come out, in his relations with women. Women played a large part in Casanova's life; he was nearly always in love. We may use the word 'love' here in no euphemistic sense, for although Casanova's passions grew and ripened with the rapidity born of long experience in these matters, so fresh is the vitality of the man that there is ever a virginal bloom on every new ardour. He was as far removed from the cold-blooded libertine typified in Laclos's *Valmont*, unscrupulously using women as the instruments of his own lust, as from Laura's sonneteering lover. He had fully grasped what the latest writer on the scientific psychology of sex calls the secondary law of courting, namely, the development in the male of an imaginative attentiveness to the psychical and bodily states of the female, in place of an exclusive attentiveness to his own gratification. It is not impossible that in these matters Casanova could have given a lesson to many virtuous husbands of our own highly moral century. He never sank to the level of the vulgar maxim that 'all's fair in love and war.' He sought his pleasure in the pleasure, and not in the complaisance, of the women he loved, and they seem to have gratefully and tenderly recognized his skill in the art of love-making. Casanova loved many women, but broke few hearts. The same women appear again and again through his pages, and for the most part no lapse of years seems to deaden the gladness with which he goes forth to meet them anew. That he knew himself well enough never to take either wife or mistress must be counted as a virtue, such as it was, in this incomparable lover of so many women. A man of finer moral fibre could scarcely have loved so many women; a man of coarser fibre could never have left so many women happy.

This very lack of moral delicacy which shuts Casanova off from the finest human development is an advantage to the autobiographer. It ensures his sincerity because he is unconscious of offence; it saves us from any wearisome self-justification, because, for all his amused

self-criticism, he sees no real need for justification. In Rousseau's *Confessions* we hear the passionate pleader against men at the tribunal of God; here we are conscious neither of opponent nor tribunal. Casanova is neither a pillar of society nor yet one of the moral Samsons who delight to pull down the pillars of society; he has taken the world as it is, and he has taken himself as he is, and he has enjoyed them both hugely. So he is free to set forth the whole of himself, his achievements, his audacities, his failures, his little weaknesses and superstitions, his amours, his quarrels, his good fortune and his bad fortune in the world that on the whole he has found so interesting and happy a place to dwell in. And his book remains an unending source of delightful study of the man of impulse and action in all his moods. The self-reliant man, immensely apt for enjoyment, who plants himself solidly with his single keen wit before the mighty oyster of the world, has never revealed himself so clearly before.

What manner of man Casanova seemed to his contemporaries has only been discovered of recent years; and while the picture which we obtain of him has been furnished by his enemies, and was not meant to flatter, it admirably supports the *Mémoires*. In 1755 a spy of the Venetian Inquisition reported that Casanova united impiety, imposture, and wantonness to a degree that inspired horror. It was in that same year that he was arrested, chiefly on the charge of contempt for religion, and sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Fifteen months later he had effected his famous escape, and was able to pursue his career as an assured and accomplished adventurer who had brilliantly completed his apprenticeship. It is not until many years later, in 1772, when his long efforts to obtain pardon from his country still remained unsuccessful, that we obtain an admirable picture of him from the Venetian agent at Ancona. 'He comes and goes where he will,' the agent reports, 'with open face and haughty mien, always well equipped. He is a man of some forty years at most [really about forty-eight, thus confirming Casanova's

statement that he was always taken for some ten years younger than his years], of lofty stature, of fine and vigorous aspect, with bright eyes and very brown skin. He wears a short, chestnut-coloured peruke. I am told that his character is bold and disdainful, but especially that he is full of speech, and of witty and well-instructed speech.' Two years later Casanova was at last permitted to return to Venice. He there accepted the post of secret agent of the State Inquisition for service within the city. Like Defoe and Toland, who were also secret political agents, he attempted to justify himself on grounds of public duty. In a few years, however, he was dismissed, perhaps, as Baschet suggests, on account of the fact that his reports contained too much philosophy and not enough espionage; probably it was realized that a man of such powerful individuality and independence was not fitted for servile uses. Finally, in 1782, he was banished from Venice for an offence to which the blood of the Casanovas had always been easily inclined—he published an audacious satire against a patrician. From Venice he went to Trieste, and thence to Vienna. There he met Count Waldstein, a fervent adept of Kabbalistic science, a subject in which Casanova himself claimed to be proficient; he had found it useful in certain dealings with credulous people. In 1784 the count offered him the post of librarian, with a salary of one thousand florins, at his castle of Dux, in Bohemia. It is said to be a fine castle, and is still noted for its charming park. Here this prince of Bohemians spent the remainder of his life, devoting seven years to the *Mémoires*, on which he was still engaged at his death. A terra-cotta bust discovered at the castle (and etched some years ago for *Le Livre*) shows him in mature age, a handsome, energetic, and imposing head, with somewhat deep-set eyes; it is by no means the head of a scamp, but rather that of a philosopher, a philosopher with unusual experience of affairs, a successful statesman, one might say. A medallion portrait, of later date, which has also been reproduced, shows him at the age of sixty-three with

lean, eager face, and lofty, though receding forehead, the type of the man of quick perception and swift action, the eagle type of man. The Prince de Ligne has also left a description of him as he appeared in old age, now grown very irritable, ready to flare up at any imagined insult, engaged in perpetual warfare with domestics, but receiving the highest consideration from those who knew how to appreciate the great qualities of the man and his unequalled experiences, and who knew also how to indulge his susceptibilities and smile at his antique fashions. Once he went off in a huff to Weimar, and was graciously received by the Duke, but he soon came back again; all the favours there were showered on a certain court favourite, one Goethe. It is clear, as we read the Prince de Ligne's detailed description, that the restless old adventurer had need, even in the peaceful seclusion of Dux, of all the consolation yielded by Socrates, Horace, Seneca, and Boethius, his favourite philosophers. Here, at Dux, on the 4th of June 1798, Casanova died. 'Bear witness that I have lived as a philosopher and die as a Christian'; that, we are told, was his last utterance after he had received the sacraments.

From that moment Casanova with everything that concerned him was covered by a pall of oblivion. He seems to have been carelessly cast aside, together with the century of which he was so characteristic, and, as it now appears, so memorable a child. The world in which he had lived so joyously and completely had been transformed by the Revolution. The new age of strenuous commercialism and complacent philanthropy was in its vigorous youth, a sword in its right hand and a Bible in its left. The only adventurer who found favour now was he who took the glad news of salvation to the heathen, or mowed them down to make new openings for trade. Had he been born later, we may be well assured, Casanova would have known how to play his part; he would not have fallen short of Borrow, who became an agent of the Bible Society. But as it was, what had the new age to do with Casanova? No one

cared, no one even yet has cared, so much as to examine the drawers and cupboards full of papers which he left behind at Dux. Only on the 13th of February 1820 was the oblivion a little stirred. On that date a certain Carlo Angiolieri appeared at Leipzig in the office of the famous publisher, Brockhaus, carrying a voluminous manuscript in the handwriting (as we now know) of Casanova and bearing the title, *Histoire de ma Vie jusqu'à l'an 1797*.

But even the appearance of Carlo Angiolieri failed to dissipate the gloom. Fifty years more were to pass before the figure of Casanova again became clear. This man, so ardently alive in every fibre, had now become a myth. The sagacious world—which imparts the largest dole of contempt to the pilgrim who brings back to it the largest gifts—refused to take Casanova seriously. The shrewd critic wondered who wrote Casanova, just as he has since wondered who wrote Shakespeare. Paul Lacroix paid Stendhal the huge compliment of suggesting that he had written the *Mémoires*, a sufficiently ingenious suggestion, for in Stendhal's Dauphiny spirit there is something of that love of adventure which is supremely illustrated in Casanova. But we now know that, as Armand Baschet first proved, Casanova himself really wrote his own *Mémoires*. Moreover, so far as investigation has yet been able to go, he wrote with strict regard to truth. Wherever it is possible to test Casanova, his essential veracity has always been vindicated. In the nature of things it is impossible to verify much that he narrates. When, however, we remember that he was telling the story of his life primarily for his own pleasure, it is clear that he had no motive for deception; and when we consider the surpassingly discreditable episodes which he has recorded, we may recall that he has given not indeed positive proof of sincerity, but certainly the best that can be given in the absence of direct proof. It remains a question how far a man is able to recollect the details of the far past—the conversations he held, the garments he wore, the meals he ate—so precisely as Casanova professes to recollect them. This is a psychological problem which has not yet been experimentally

examined. There are, however, great individual differences in memory, and there is reason to believe that an organization, such as Casanova's, for which the external world is so vivid, is associated with memory-power of high quality. That this history is narrated with absolute precision of detail Casanova himself would probably not have asserted. But there is no reason to doubt his good faith, and there is excellent reason to accept the substantial accuracy of his narrative. It remains a personal document of a value which will increase rather than diminish as time goes by. It is one of the great autobiographical revelations which the ages have left us, with Augustine's, Cellini's, Rousseau's, of its own kind supreme.

## II

The *Mémoires* are authentic; they give us what they profess to give us—the true story of a man who unites (as it has been well said) the characters of Gil Blas and of Figaro. Thus Casanova was the incarnation in real life of the two most typical imaginative figures of his century. Yet even if the *Mémoires* had been the invention of some novelist of surpassing genius they would still possess extraordinary interest. We may forget that the book is an autobiography, and still find it, as a story of adventure, the apotheosis of the picaresque novel.

The picaresque novel—although a Frenchman brought it to perfection in *Gil Blas*—arose and flourished in Spain, Casanova's ancestral country, and its piquancy, variety, and audacity seem to have been very congenial to the Spanish spirit and the Spanish soil. Casanova's *Mémoires* carry this form of story on to a broader and in some respects higher plane. The old *pícaro* never dared affront the world; he cringed before it and slunk behind its back to make grimaces. Casanova, too, was an adventurer living by his wits, but he approached the world with the same self-confidence as he approached a beautiful woman, and having won its favours treats

it with the same consideration. Unlike the *picaro* whose delight it is to reveal the pettinesses of the men he has duped, Casanova shows his magnificence in adventure by regarding the world as a foeman worthy of all his courtesy; and with incomparable impartiality, as well as skill, he presents to us the narrative of all the perils he encountered or sought. Few old men sitting down in the evening of their days to chatter of old times have been so free as Casanova from the vices of senile literature. He never maunders of the things that are so dear to the aged merely because they are past; he introduces no superfluous reflections or comments. We recognize that the hand which keeps this pen so surely to the point is the hand of a man of action. Casanova's skill in narrative is conspicuously shown in the love-adventures which form so large and important a part of his book, as of his life. (Men usually regard love as a bagatelle, he says somewhere, but, for his own part, he adds, he has found no more important business in life.) There would seem to be nothing so difficult as to tell a long series of amours, unshrinkingly, from first to last, without drawing a curtain at any stage. Nearly every writer in fiction or in autobiography who has attempted this has only produced an effect of weary monotony or else of oppressive closeness. But Casanova succeeds. Partly, this is due to the variety and individuality he is able to give, not only to every incident, but to every woman he meets; so that his book is a gallery of delightful women, drawn with an art that almost recalls his great contemporary, Goethe. Partly, it seems, he was aided by his vivid and sympathetic Venetian temperament; his swift, unliterary style finds time for no voluptuous languors. He was aided even by his immodesty, for in literature as in the plastic arts and in life itself, the nude is nearer to virtue than the *décolleté*. The firm and absolute precision of every episode in these *Mémoires* leaves no room for any undue dallying with the fringes of love's garments. Casanova tells his story swiftly and boldly, with no more delay than is needed to record every

essential detail; he is the absolute anti-type to Sterne as a narrator; the most libertine of authors, he is yet free from prurience. Thus the man of action covers the romancer with confusion; this supreme book of adventures is a real man's record of his own real life.

But let us forget that it is an autobiography and take it merely as a story. Its immense range of human interest, its audacious realism, its freedom from perversity, entitle us to regard it as a typical story of adventure. And I ask myself: What is the relation of such a book to life? what is the moral worth of Casanova's *Mémoires*?

A foolish, superfluous question, I know, it seems to many. And I am willing to admit that there may possibly be things in life which it is desirable to do, and yet undesirable to moralize over; I would even assert that the moral worth of many of our actions lies precisely in their unconsciousness of any moral worth. Yet beneath the freest moral movements there must be a solid basis of social law, just as beneath the most gracious movements of the human body there lies the regulated play of mechanical law. When we find it assumed that there are things which are good to do and not good to justify we may strongly suspect that we have come across a mental muddle.

To see the matter rightly we must take it at the beginning. No one can rightly see the moral place of immoral literature—the literature of adventure—in the case of adults unless he sees it in the case of children. Of late years the people who write in newspapers and magazines have loudly abused all stories of the crudely heroic order, the stories of impossible virtue and unheard-of villainy in far-away lands, of marvellously brave bands under extravagantly reckless leaders, who march on through careless bloodshed to incredible victory or incalculable treasure. The hero of the average boy—magnificent sombrero on head, pistols in belt, galloping off on his mighty charger, a villain grasped by the scruff of the neck in each outstretched hand—has been severely mauled. The suggestions

offered for the displacement of this literature furnish documents for the psychologist. Let us have cheap lives of Jesus and the Apostle Paul! let us flood the world with the sober romances licensed by religious societies!—say those good people in the newspapers and the magazines. If they have ever themselves been children, and if so, how they came into the world shrouded in an impenetrable caul which will for ever shut them out from insight into the hearts of the young, is not known, and perhaps is no matter. Putting aside these estimable persons, there is in every heart a chamber dedicated to the impossible, and the younger the heart the larger is this golden ventricle. For the child who can just read, *Jack the Giant-killer*, and the story of those human-souled swans which make the swan a mystic bird for all our lives, are better worth knowing than any fact of the visible world. Some day the Life of Jesus, and even perhaps the Life of Paul, will seem to be among the sweetest and strangest of the world's fairy-tales; but that day will hardly come until every church and chapel has been spiritually razed to the ground. It cannot come to the generation which has had the name of Jesus thrust down its throat in Sunday-schools and board-schools. We English are a practical, common-sense people, and we cure our children of any hearty taste for religion as confectioners are said to cure their assistants of any excessive taste for sweets, by a preliminary surfeit. No doubt we are very wise, but we postpone indefinitely the day when children will come to our religious tales in the pure gladness of their joy in the marvellous.

In the meantime there ought not to be any doubt that children should be fed on fairy-tales as their souls' most natural food. Nothing can make up for the lack of them at the outset, just as no later supply of milk can compensate for the starvation involved in feeding infants on starch. The power of assimilating fairy-tales is soon lost, and unless the child has a rarely powerful creative imagination its spiritual growth on this side at least remains for ever stunted.

If then childhood needs its pure fairy-land, and youth its fairy-land of impossible adventure, what fairy-land is left for adult age? Scarcely the novel. The modern novel in its finest manifestations, however engrossingly interesting, takes us but a little step from the passionate interests of our own lives. If I turn to the two recent novels which have most powerfully interested me—Huysmans' *En Route* and Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*—I find that their interest lies largely in the skill with which they present and concentrate two mighty problems of actual life, the greatest of all problems, religion and sex. In adult life we seek a fairy-land occupied by beings at once as real as ourselves, and yet far removed from the sphere of our own actual interests and the heavy burden of the atmosphere under which we live; only so can it fascinate the imaginations of those who have outgrown the simple imaginative joys of early life. Casanova's *Mémoires* is the perfected type of the books which answer these requirements. It is unflinchingly real, immensely varied, the audaciously truthful narrative of undeniably human impulses. And yet it carries us out of relation with the problems of our actual life; it leads us into the realm of fairy-land.

But—analysing the matter a little more closely—it may still fairly be asked whether a book which, in spite of its remoteness, represents a form of human life, must not have a certain bearing on morals. Is not a part of its attraction, and indeed that of all fairy-lands, the existence of a different code of morals? It seems to me that this is so. But precisely in that lies the moral value of such literature. Indeed the whole question of the moral value of art—that is to say, of aesthetic enjoyment—is really involved here. The matter is worth looking into.

It is one of Schopenhauer's unforgettable sayings, that whatever course of action we take in life there is always some element in our nature which could only find satisfaction in an exactly contrary course; so that, take what road we will, we yet always remain restless and unsatisfied in part. To Schopenhauer that reflection

made for pessimism; it need not. The more finely and adequately we adjust ourselves to the actual conditions of our life the larger, no doubt, the unused and unsatisfied region within us. But it is just here that art comes in. Art largely counts for its effects on playing on these unused fibres of our organism, and by so doing it serves to bring them into a state of harmonious satisfaction—moralizes them, if you will. Alienists have described a distressing form of insanity peculiar to old maids who have led honourable lives of abstinence and abnegation. After years of seeming content with the conditions of their lot they begin to manifest uncontrollable obsessions and erotic impulses; the unused elements of life, which they had shut down in the cellars of their souls and almost forgotten, have at last arisen in rebellion, clamouring tumultuously for satisfaction. The old orgies—the Saturnalian festival at Christmas and the Midsummer Festival on St. John's Day—bear witness that the ancients in their wisdom recognized that the bonds of the actual daily moral life must sometimes be relaxed lest they break from over-tension. We have lost the orgy, but in its place we have art. Our respectable matrons no longer send out their daughters with torches at midnight into the woods and among the hills, where dancing and wine and blood may lash into their flesh the knowledge of the mysteries of life, but they take them to *Tristan*, and are fortunately unable to see into those carefully brought-up young souls on such occasions. The moralizing force of art lies, not in its capacity to present a timid imitation of our experiences, but in its power to go beyond our experience, satisfying and harmonizing the unfulfilled activities of our nature. That art should have such an effect on those who contemplate it is not surprising when we remember that, to some extent, art has a similar influence on its creators. 'Libertin d'esprit mais sage de mœurs,' it was said of Watteau. Mohammed when he wrote so voluptuously of the black-eyed houris of Paradise was still young and the blameless husband of an aged woman.

Singing is sweet; but be sure of this,  
Lips only sing when they cannot kiss.

It has been said of Wagner that he had in him the instincts of an ascetic and of a satyr, and the first is just as necessary as the second to the making of a great artist. It is a very ancient observation that the most unchaste verse had often been written by the chapest poets, and that the writers who have written most purely have found their compensation in living impurely.<sup>1</sup> In the same manner it has always been found in Christendom, both among Catholics and Protestants, that much of the most licentious literature has been written by the clergy, by no means because the clergy are a depraved class, but precisely because the austerity of their lives renders necessary for them these emotional athletics. Of course, from the standpoint of simple nature, such literature is bad, it is merely a form of that obscenity which, as Huysmans has acutely remarked, can only be produced by those who are chaste; in nature desire passes swiftly into action, leaving little or no trace on the mind. A certain degree of continence—I do not mean merely in the region of sex but in the other fields of human action also—is needed as a breeding-ground for the dreams and images of desire to develop into the perfected visions of art. But the point of view of society is scarcely that of unadulterated nature. In society we have not always room for the swift and free passage of impulse into action; to avoid the evils of repressed impulse this play of the emotions on a higher and serener plane becomes essential. Just as we need athletics to expand and harmonize the coarser unused energies of the organism, so we need art and literature to expand and harmonize its finer energies, emotion being, as it may not be superfluous to point out, itself

<sup>1</sup> I take the first example which comes to hand, for whatever it may be worth: 'Luttrell was talking of Moore and Rogers—the poetry of the former so licentious, that of the latter so pure; much of its popularity owing to its being so carefully weeded of everything approaching to indelicacy; and the contrast between the *lives* and the *works* of the two men—the former a pattern of conjugal and domestic regularity, the latter of all the men he had ever known the greatest sensualist' (Greville's *Memoirs*, vol. iii, p. 324).

largely a muscular process, motion in a more or less arrested form, so that there is here more than a mere analogy. Art from this point of view is the athletics of the emotions.

The adventures of fairy-land—of which for our age I take Casanova's *Mémoires* as the type—constitute an important part of this athletics. It may be abused, just as we have the grosser excesses of the runner and the cyclist; but it is the abuse and not the use which is pernicious, and under the artificial conditions of civilization the contemplation of the life and adventures of the heroically natural man is an exercise with fine spiritual uses. Such literature thus has a moral value: it helps us to live peacefully within the highly specialized routine of civilization.

That is the underlying justification for Casanova's *Mémoires* as moral literature. But there is no reason why it should emerge into consciousness when we take up these *Mémoires*, any more than a man need take up a branch of physical athletics with any definite hygienic aim. It is sufficient to be moved by the pure enjoyment of it. And there must be something unwholesome and abnormal—something corrupt at the core—in any civilized man or woman who cannot win some enjoyment from this book.

### III

The more I contemplate the eighteenth century the more interesting I find it. In my youth it seemed to me unworthy of a glance. The books and the men, Shelley above all, who stirred my young blood belonged to the early nineteenth-century. I was led to regard the last century as a dull period of stagnation and decay, a tomb into which the spirit of man sank after the slow death which followed the Renaissance. The dawn of the nineteenth century was an Easter Day of the human soul, rising from the sepulchre and flinging aside the old eighteenth-century winding-sheet.

I have nothing yet to say against the early nineteenth

century, which was indeed only the outcome of the years that went before, but I have gained a new delight in the men of the eighteenth century. It was in that age that the English spirit found its most complete intellectual expression, unaffected by foreign influence. When that spirit, reviving after the wars that lamentably cut short the development of Chaucer's magnificent song, again began its free literary development—no doubt with some stimulus from Humanism—it was suddenly smothered at birth by the Renaissance wave from Italy and France. We may divine how it would have developed independently if we think of John Heywood's dramatic sketches—pale as those are after the Miller's tale in which for the first and last time Chaucer perfectly mated English realism to the lyric grace of English idealism—and to some extent, also, when we turn to the later Heywood's plays, or Dekker's, and especially to the robust and tolerant humanity, the sober artistic breadth of the one play of Porter's which has come down to us. But the intoxicating melodies of Ronsard and his fellows were heard from over sea, and the men of the English Renaissance arose—Llyl and Lodge and Campion with their refinements, Greene and Nash with their gay and brilliant music, Marlowe with his arrogant, irresistible energy—and brought to birth an absolutely new spirit, which may have been English enough in its rich and virginal elements, but received the seminal principle from abroad. It needed a century and more for that magnificent tumult to subside, and for the old English spirit to reappear and reach at last full maturity, by happy chance again in association with France, though this time it is England that chiefly plays the masculine part and impregnates France. Thus the eighteenth century was an age in which the English spirit found complete self-expression, and also an age in which England and France joined hands intellectually, and stood together at the summit of civilization, with no rivals, unless Goethe and Kant may suffice to stand for a whole people. In the great Englishmen of these days we find the qualities which are truly native to

Britain, and which have too often been torn and distracted by insane aberrations. There is a fine sobriety and sagacity in the English spirit, a mellow human solidity, such as the Romans possessed always, but which we in our misty and storm-swept island have often exchanged, perhaps for better, but certainly for other qualities. It was not so in the eighteenth century, and by no accident the historian who has most finely expressed the genius of Rome was an eighteenth-century Englishman. All the most typical men of that age possessed in varying degree the same qualities: Locke, Swift, Fielding, Hume, Richardson, Goldsmith, Hogarth, Johnson, Godwin. Thus the eighteenth century should undoubtedly be a source of pride to the British heart. England's reputation in the world rests largely on our poetic aptitudes and our political capacity. Eighteenth-century England is not obviously pre-eminent in either respect, although it was the great age of our political development and the seed-time of our second great poetic age; it produced scarcely more than a single first-class poet exclusively within its limits, and it lost America. Yet our greatest philosopher, our greatest historian, our greatest biographer, nearly all our greatest novelists, our great initiators in painting, who were indirectly the initiators of the greater art of France, belong wholly to this century, and an unequalled cluster of our greatest poets belongs to its close. And these men were marked by sanity and catholicity, a superb solidity of spirit; they became genuinely cosmopolitan without losing any of their indigenous virtues. Without the eighteenth century we should never have known many of the greatest qualities which are latent, and too often only latent, in our race. Landor and Wordsworth alone were left to carry something of the spirit of the English eighteenth century far on into the literature of our own wholly alien century.

And their brothers of France were their most worthy peers. This spirit, indeed, which we see so conspicuously in the finest men of their age in England and France, was singularly widespread throughout Europe, a cheerful

sobriety, a solid humanity, little troubled by any of those 'movements' which were to become so prolific and so noisy in the next century. Christianity, it seemed, was decaying. Diderot, well informed on English affairs, wrote to a friend that in a few years it would be extinct, and looking at the state of the English Church at that time, no one could reasonably have surmised that Zinzendorf in Germany, and after him Wesley in England on a lower plane and Law on a higher plane, had already initiated that revival of Christianity which in our own century was destined to work itself out so obstreperously. But the world seemed none the worse for the apparent subsidence of Christianity; in the opinion of many it seemed to be very much the better. The tolerant paganism of classic days appeared to be reasserting itself, robustly in England, with a delicate refinement in France—setting the paganism of Watteau against the paganism of Fielding—while Goethe and the Germans generally were striving to rescue and harmonize the best of Christianity with the best of antiquity. European civilization was fully expanded; for a long time no great disturbing force had arisen, and though on every side the tender buds of coming growths might have been detected, they could not yet reveal their strength. Such a period certainly has its terrible defects; mellowness is not far from rottenness. But then youth also has its defects, and its crude acidity is still further from perfection. The nineteenth century has a higher moral standard than the eighteenth, so at least we in our self-righteousness have been accustomed to think. But even if so, the abstract existence of a high moral standard is another thing from the prevalence of high moral living. Whatever the standard may be, it is a question whether the lives are much different. In the one case the standard is much above the practice, in the other only a little above it—that is the chief difference. And the advantages of winding the standard up to the higher pitch are not so unmixed as is sometimes assumed. One need not question these advantages,

well recognized in the present century. But the advantages of a lower standard are less often recognized. There is especially the great advantage that we attain a higher degree of sincerity, and sincerity, if not itself the prime virtue, is surely, whatever the virtue may be, its chief accompaniment. A life that is swathed and deformed in much drapery is not so wholesome or so effective as one that can live nearer to the sun. And the unrecognizable villain is most pernicious; the brigand who holds a revolver at your head is better than the sleek and well-dressed thief who opens the proceedings with prayer. The eighteenth has been called a gross and unintelligent century. In the department of criticism, indeed, this century in England (for it was far otherwise in Germany) comes very short of our own century, and it is largely this failure to measure the precise value of things in aesthetic perception which now makes that age seem so shocking. From this point of view every great age—and not least our own greatest Elizabethan age—is equally defective. A period of energetic life cannot afford to spend much time on the solitary contemplation of its own bowels of aesthetic emotion. To produce a *Pater* is the one exquisite function of a spiritually barren and exhausted age. And still the eighteenth century redeems its critical grossness by making even this later development possible; it lifted the man of letters from the place of a dependant to the place of a free man boldly prophesying in his own right; and, moreover, it was the first century which dared to claim the complete equality of men and women with all which that involves.

If it has required a certain insight for the child of our own century to discover the great qualities of the last century, there cannot be much doubt about the final judgment of the most competent judges. The eighteenth was, as Renouvier has called it, the first century of humanity since Christ, while at the same time, as Lange has said, it was penetrated through by the search for the ideal, or, as a more recent thinker concludes, it was a century dominated by the maxim

*Salus populi suprema est lex*, holding in its noble aspirations after general happiness the germs of all modern socialism. In art and literature it saw the fresh spring of those blossoms which opened so splendidly and faded so swiftly in our century; it was the century not only of Hogarth and Fielding and Voltaire, but of Blake and Rousseau, of Diderot, of Swedenborg and Mesmer, of the development of modern music with Mozart and Beethoven, of the unparalleled enthusiasm awakened by the discovery of the Celtic world. And as its crowning glory the eighteenth century claims Goethe. Men will scarcely look back to our own century as so good to live in. One may well say that he would have gladly lived in the thirteenth century, perhaps the most interesting of all since Christ, or in the sixteenth, probably the most alive of all, or the eighteenth, surely the most human. But why have lived in the nineteenth, the golden age of machinery, and of men used as machines?

Eighteenth-century Europe, being what it was, formed a perfect stage for Casanova to play his part on. With his Spanish and Italian blood, he was of the race of those who had come so actively to the front in the last days of old classic Rome, and his immediate ancestors had lived in the centre of the pagan Rome of the Renaissance. Thus he carried with him traditions which consort well with much in the eighteenth century. And he had that in him, moreover, which no tradition can give, the incommunicable vitality in the presence of which all tradition shrivels into nothingness.

Casanova knew not only Italy, France, England, Germany, and Holland; he had visited Spain, Russia, Poland, Greece, Turkey, and Asia Minor. He was received by Benedict XII, by Frederick II of Prussia, by the Empress Catherine, by Joseph II. He was at home in Paris, in London, in Berlin, in Vienna; he knew Munich, Dresden, Moscow, Sr. Petersburg, Warsaw, Barcelona. His picture of London is of great interest. He spent much of the year 1763 there, and some of his most interesting experiences, romantic and psychological, occurred during that period. He even

dated the close of what he calls the second act in the comedy of his life from that visit to London, the next and concluding act being one of slow declination. So profound was his depression at this time that one day he went towards the Thames at the Tower with the deliberate intention of drowning himself, having first filled his pockets with bullets to ensure sinking. Fortunately an English friend (to whom the world owes thanks) met him on the way, read his resolve in his face, and insisted on carrying him off to a very convivial party, whose indecorous proceedings, although Casanova only remained a passive witness, served to dissipate all thoughts of suicide. He is not, however, prejudiced against England; on the contrary, he finds that no nation offers so many interesting peculiarities to the attentive observer. As usual, in London Casanova mixed indiscriminately with the best and the worst society; his wit, his knowledge, his imperturbable effrontery, his charming conversation, served to open any door that he desired to open. He gives us curious glimpses into the lives of English noblemen of the day, and not less intimate pictures of the *chevaliers d'industrie* who preyed upon them. In the course of one adventure with people of the latter sort he was haled before the eminent blind magistrate Sir John Fielding, whom he seems to have mistaken, though this is not quite clear, for his yet more eminent brother Henry. He also met Kitty Fischer, the most fashionable *cocotte* of her day, whom we may yet see as Reynolds caught her in a well-inspired moment, dilating her sensitive nostrils, radiantly inhaling the joy of life, and he tells us anecdotes of her extravagance, of the jewels she wore, of the thousand-guinea bank-note which she ate in a sandwich.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For another side of life we may read his description of the English Sunday: 'On Sunday one dares neither to play at cards nor to perform music. The numerous spies who infest the streets of this capital listen to the sounds which come from the parlours of the houses, and if they suspect any gaming or singing they conceal themselves and slip in at the first opportunity to seize those bad Christians who dare to profane the Lord's Day by amusements which everywhere else are counted innocent. In revenge the English may go with impunity to sanctify

Throughout Europe Casanova knew many of the most celebrated people of his time, though it is clear—as one would expect from a man of his impartial humanity—he seldom went out of his way to meet them. His visit to Voltaire is a distinct contribution to our knowledge of that sage; he admired Helvétius, and wondered how a man of so many virtues could have denied virtue; D'Alembert he thought the most truly modest man he had ever met, an interesting tribute from the most truly immodest man of that period. The value of Casanova's record of the eighteenth century lies, however, by no means in the glimpses he has given us of great personalities: that has been much better done by much more insignificant writers. It is as a picture of the manners and customs of the eighteenth century throughout Europe that the *Mémoires* are invaluable. Casanova saw Europe from the courts of kings to the lowest *bas-fonds*. He lived in the castles of French and Italian nobles, in the comfortable homes of Dutch merchants, in his own house in Pall Mall, in taverns and inns and peasants' cottages anywhere. He had no intellectual prejudices, he had an immense versatility in tastes and practical aptitudes, he was genuinely interested in all human things. Thus he approached life with no stereotyped set of opinions, but with all the aloofness of an unclassed adventurer, who was at the same time a scholar and a man of letters. It can scarcely be that there is any record to compare with this as a vivid and impartial picture of the eighteenth century, in its robust solidity, its cheerful and tolerant scepticism, its serene and easy gaiety, its mellow decay. That is our final debt to this unique and immortal book.

the holy day in the taverns and brothels which are so plentiful in this city.' One may compare with this Mme de Staël's almost Dantesque description—so at least it remains in the memory—of the gloom of the Scotch Sabbath in the days of Burns. This statement of the matter remained substantially accurate until almost yesterday. So long it remained for the English spirit to re-conquer Sunday! It must be remembered that Puritanism, while always a part of the English spirit, was not originally its predominant note; it only became so as an inevitable reaction against the exotic Renaissance movement. Mary Stuart made Knox, Charles I made Cromwell, and both monarchs were intimately associated with the last wave of the Renaissance.

What should be our last word about Casanova? It is true that although—if indeed one should not say because—he was so heroically natural Casanova was not an average normal man. It is scarcely given to the average man to expend such versatile and reckless skill in the field of the world, or to find so large a part wherein to play off that skill. But neither are the saints and philosophers normal; St. Bernard was not normal, nor yet Spinoza. And surely it is a poor picture of the world which would show us St. Bernard and Spinoza and shut out Casanova. ‘*Vous avez l’outil universel*,’ Fabrice said to Gil Blas. Casanova’s brain was just such a tool of universal use, and he never failed to use it. For if you would find the supreme type of the human animal in the completest development of his rankness and cunning, in the very plenitude of his most excellent wits, I know not where you may more safely go than to the *Mémoires* of the self-ennobled Jacques Casanova, Chevalier de Seingalt.

## ST. FRANCIS AND OTHERS

THE religion of Jesus was the invention of a race which itself never accepted that religion. In the East religions spring up, for the most part, as naturally as flowers, and, like flowers, are scarcely a matter for furious propaganda. These deep sagacious Eastern men threw us of old this rejected flower, as they have since sent us the vases and fans they found too tawdry; and when we send our missionaries out to barter back the gift at a profit, they say no word, but their faces wear the mysterious Eastern smile. Yet for us, at all events, the figure of Jesus symbolizes, and will always symbolize, a special attitude towards life, made up of tender human sympathy and mystical reliance on the unseen forces of the world. In certain stories of the Gospels, certain sayings, in many of the parables, this attitude finds the completest expression of its sweetest abandonment. But to us, men of another race living in far distant corners of the world, it seems altogether oriental and ascetic, a morbid exceptional phenomenon. And as a matter of fact Jesus found no successor. Over the stage of those gracious and radiant scenes swiftly fell a fire-proof curtain, wrought of systematic theology and formal metaphysics, which even the divine flames of that wonderful personality were unable to melt.

Something even stronger than theology or metaphysics has served to cut us off from the spirit of Jesus, and that is the spirit of Paul, certainly the real founder of 'Christianity,' as we know it, for Jerome, Augustine, Luther, were all the children of Paul, and in no respect the children of Jesus. That marvellous little Jew painted in its main outlines the picture of Christianity which in the theatre of this world has for so many centuries shut us off from Jesus. Impelled by the intense and concentrated energy of his twisted suffering nature, Paul brought 'moral force' into our western world, and

after it that infinite procession of hypocrisies and cruelties and artificialities which still trains loathsomey across the scene of civilized life. Jesus may have been a visionary, but his visions were in divine harmony with the course of nature, with the wine and the bread of life, with children and with flowers. We may be very sure that Paul never considered the lilies, or found benediction with children. He trampled on nature when it came in his way, and for the rest never saw it. He was not, as Festus thought, a madman, but whether or not, as his experiences seem to indicate, he was a victim to the 'sacred disease' of epilepsy, concerning his profoundly neurotic temperament there can be no manner of question.

He flung himself on to men, this terrible apostle of the 'Gentiles,' thrusting faith down their throats at the point of a spiritual sword so fiery and keen that, by no miracle, it soon became a sword of steel with red blood dripping from its point. Wellnigh everything that has ever been evil in Christianity, its temporal power, its accursed intolerance, its contempt for reason, for beautiful living, for every sweet and sunny and simple aspect of the world—all that is involved in the awful conception of 'moral force'—flows directly from Paul. What eternal torture could be adequate for so monstrous an offender? And yet, when you think of the potent personality concentrated in this morbid man, of his courage, of the intolerance that he wreaked on himself, the flashes of divine insight in his restless and turbulent spirit, of the humility of the neuropath who desired to be 'altogether mad,' the pathos of it all, indignation falls silent. What can be said?

Thus Paul and not Peter was the rock on which the Church was built, and whatever virtues the Church may have possessed have not been the virtues of Jesus but the quite other virtues of Paul. Yet Jesus has not wholly been left without witness even in Europe, and it is the special charm and significance of Francis of Assisi that he, if not alone certainly chief among European men, has incarnated some measure of the

graciousness that was in Jesus, and made it visible and real to the European world. And he has done that by no means through the influence of the Church, or by imitation, but by wholly natural and spontaneous impulse. To understand Francis we must first of all realize that he was in no sense and at no time the creature of the Church, being indeed from first to last in a very real sense antagonistic to the Church. The whole world as Francis knew it was Christian, and he was by no means a man of inquisitive analytic intellectual type, a Bruno or a Campanella; he accepted Christianity because it was there, and while remaining in it was never of it, resenting fiercely any attempt of the Church to encroach on the free activity of his personality, dispensing himself of any intimate adherence not by intellectual sophistries, but by lightly brushing away science and theology altogether as useless superfluities.

An acute psychologist has well remarked that those famous historical persons who have passed through two antithetical phases of character, survive for us usually only in one of those phases, that we can remember only the post-conversion Augustine and the pre-abdication Diocletian. Such one-sided views of great and complex characters suit our rough and lazy methods of ordinary thought, content to regard a man only on that side which has been most prominently displayed to the world. But such methods are fatal to any clear psychological conception of character or to any sound ethical conception of life. Francis lived one of these double-sided lives, and the Francis we remember is the emaciated saint already developing the stigmata of divine grace. In his earlier biographies we catch glimpses of a younger and quite other Francis, *in vanitatibus nutritus insolenter*, the spendthrift companion of nobles, proud to surpass them in youthful extravagance and dissipation, the head of a band which dazzled the citizens of Assisi with the luxury of their rich garments and the sound of their festive songs by night, a passionate lover of chivalry and the troubadours, whose music then filled

the air, so full of gaiety that he sometimes seemed almost mad to the grave citizens of his town, one whose nature it was from the first to go to excess, always to a fine and generous excess, that spiritual excess which Blake called the road to the palace of wisdom.

The later Francis survived; the early Francis is forgotten. But we may be assured that there would have been no Francis the saint if there had not been Francis the sinner. That grace and elation, the tender humanity and infinite delight in natural things, even the profound contempt for luxury and superfluity, were not learnt in any of the saint's beloved Umbrian cells; they were the final outcome of a beautifully free and excessive life acting on an exquisitely fine-strung organism. Rarely has any follower of Francis attained in any measure to his level of exalted freedom, joy, and simplicity in saintliness. It was not alone that they could not possess his organism, but they had not lived his life. Their piety even blinded their eyes, and just as the biographers of Jesus omitted all reference to the formative years of his life, so also the biographers of Francis gradually eliminated the early records, terrified at the thought that their founder may not have been a virgin. We do not win any clear psychological insight into the man until we realize this.

It is not alone the psychological aspect which becomes clear in the light of Francis's early life. These stages of development have their ethical significance also. It seems to be too often forgotten that repression and licence are two sides of the same fact. We can only attain a fine temperance through a fine freedom, even a fine excess. The women who think that they must at all costs repress themselves, and the men who—usually with the help of certain private *accommodements*—consider repression as the proper ideal, have missed the true safeguards against licence, and flounder for ever in a turbid sea, at war with themselves, at war with nature. The saints knew better. By a process of spiritual Pasteurism, a natural and spontaneous process, they guaranteed their eternal peace. All the real

saints, so far as we know them, had many phases, such of them as were saints from their mothers' wombs possessing a significance which for human beings generally is minimal. The real saints in all ages have forgotten so many beautiful things, storing so many wonderful experiences in their past. We should not dye our clothes, says Clement of Alexandria, our life should now be anything but a pageant. Flower-like garments should be abandoned, and Bacchic revelries, 'useful for tragedies, not for life.' The dyes of Sardis—olive, green, rose-coloured, scarlet, and ten thousand other hues—invented for voluptuousness, the garments of embroidered gold and purple, dipped in perfume, stained in saffron, the bright diaphanous tissues of the dancing girl—to all these we must bid farewell. But we cannot bid them farewell unless we have known them. If you would be a saint you must begin by being something other than a saint. This it was that Clement forgot, or never knew.

In youth we are so full of energy, and life seems so long. In our ethical fervour we accept Clement's theory of conduct at his own valuation. One is so scrupulous of others, so anxious lest he hurt them; and another is so contemptuous of others, so eager to hold himself back from all but the highest good, and never to let himself fully go. And there is a fine thrill of pleasure in the self-restraint, an athletic tension of the soul. It is as if the infant at the breast should say, I will hold myself back from sucking; I will take only just ever so little, and not let myself go and draw in the delicious stream with no after-thought; there will be time for that when I am grown up. But it is not so. There is only one time in life for milk, only one time for youth; we cannot postpone life or retrace its milestones, and what is once lost is lost for ever. The cold waters of self-restraint and self-denial, as we first put our young feet in them, send a tonic shiver along the nerves, and we go on and on. But suddenly we find that the water has risen to our breasts, to our chins, that it is too late, too late, that we shall never again move and breathe

freely in the open air and sunshine. That is the fate that overtakes the young ascetic ideal. Unhappier yet are those who snatch the cup of life so hastily in youth and fill it with such muddy waters that the dregs cling to their lips for ever, spoiling the taste of the most exquisite things. To live remains an art, an art which every one must learn, and which no one can teach.

It may seem that I speak of out-worn things, and that the problem of saintliness has little relation to the moral problems of our time. It is far otherwise. You have never seen the world if you have not realized that an element of asceticism lies at the foundation of life. You may expel it with the fork of reason or of self-enjoyment, but being part of Nature herself it must ever return. All the art of living lies in a fine mingling of letting go and holding in. The man who makes the one or the other his exclusive aim in life will die before he has ever begun to live. The man who has carried one part of the process to excess before turning to the other will indeed learn what life is, and may leave behind him the memory of a pattern saint. But he alone is the wise master of living who from first to last has held the double ideal in true honour. In these, as in other matters, we cannot know the spiritual facts unless we realize the physical facts of life. All life is a building up and a breaking down, a taking in and a giving out, a perpetually anabolic and katabolic rhythm. To live rightly we must imitate both the luxury of Nature and her austerity.

What should be the place of asceticism in modern life? Evidently there is in human nature an instinct which craves for the sharpening of enjoyment which comes from simplicity and a finely-tempered abstinence, a measured drawing back when also it were possible recklessly to let go. It is easy to wave aside religious asceticism. That, it seems, may well be left to those who decide to invest their enjoyments in a heavenly bank which will pay large dividends in another world. There still remains the rational asceticism that is sweet

either for its own sake, or for its immediate and visible results in human joy.

When we contemplate the modern world from a broadly biological standpoint, there can be but little difficulty in finding free and wholesome scope for the ascetic instinct. For the Christian or Buddhist ascetic of old (as in some measure for his feeble modern imitator, the theosophist) asceticism was a rapturous indifference to life for the sake of something that seemed more than life, something that was itself a 'higher life,' and only to be achieved in the treading under foot of all that men counted life. Such conceptions belong to the past, and can only be revivified in the failing imaginations of the weary and the aged who belong to the past. The more subtle and complex conception of life which has grown up in the modern world traces life to its roots and finds it most precious where it is most intense. When we wish to carve out a world for ourselves it is the periphery which we cut away and not the core. The immense accretions of that periphery in the modern world make clearer to us than it was to our predecessors that it is in the simple and elementary things that our life consists. It is to the honour of Francis that in a vague, imperfect way he foresaw this. Aided by his early experiences, he cast aside the superfluities of knowledge and labour and skill—all that vain plethora of mere formal things and prescribed acts which men foolishly count life—and symbolizing them in wealth, joyfully espoused Poverty as a bride. For poverty to Francis meant contact with Nature and with men. The free play of the individual soul in contact with Nature and men, Francis instinctively felt, is joy and liberation; and if the simple-minded saint went farther than this, and allowed a certain set of dogmatic opinions and conventional abstentions, we may be sure that herein he had no warrant of personal inspiration, but was content to follow the wellnigh unquestioned traditions of his day. Francis fought, not for Christianity and still less for the Church, but for the great secret of fine living which he had personally divined.

It was by a true instinct that his modern biographer finds the motto of his life in the exquisite saying of the saint's great precursor, Joachim of Flora, that the true ascetic counts nothing his own, save only his harp: 'Qui vere monachus est nihil reputat esse suum nisi citharam.'

In former days we used to regard the civilized man as in some way incorporating in his organism and bringing into the world with him the inheritance of the ages of human culture. Now the tendency is to regard civilization as a growth totally outside man, and to consider the man himself as a savage who merely adapts himself to civilization as he grows up, bringing, it may be, his own little contribution to its development, but himself remaining practically a savage. Thus Weismann has argued that the development of music is purely a development of traditions, and that given the traditions any savage has a chance of becoming a Bach or a Beethoven. I think this is a more extreme view than the facts warrant us in taking. But it is fairly obvious that there has been no growth of the human intellect during at least the last two or three thousand years. We cannot beat the Romans at government; we cannot express passion better than Sappho, or form better than Phidias. We have produced no more truly scientific physicians than Hippocrates or Galen; we cannot map out the world more philosophically than Aristotle, nor play at ball with it with a greater dialectical facility than Plato. What we have done is to burden ourselves with a vaster mass of tradition. Civilization is the garment which man makes to clothe himself with. It is for each of us to help to put in a patch here, to sew on a button there, or to work in more embroidery. But the individual himself, with his own personal organic passions, never becomes part of the garment, he only wears it. Not, indeed, that we are called upon to refuse to wear it. The person who can so refuse to follow the whole tradition of the race whence he springs is organically abnormal, not to say morbid. His fellows have a fair right to call him a lunatic or a criminal. The real question is whether we shall allow

ourselves to be crushed to the earth, lame, impotent, and anaemic, by the mere garment of civilization, or whether we shall so strive to live that we wear it loosely and easily and athletically, recognizing that it is infinitely less precious than the humanity it clothes, still not without its beauty and its use.

If we wish to realize how many things are not required for fine living we may contemplate the 'triumphs of the Victorian era.' Contemplating these we are enabled also to see that they mostly belong to the mechanical side of existence, among the things that are remote from the core of life. The new energy that all these inventions may give you on one side they take from you on the other. They run on the energy that you yourself supply. They are but devices for burdening your progress and draining away your energy. For what does it avail though tons of food are piled before you at the banquet of life if the capacity of your stomach remains strictly limited? Only the more exquisite quality of the banquet, with a finer equity in its distribution, could have brought you new joy and strength. The exquisite things of life are to-day as rare and as precious as ever they were. If the Victorian era had given a keener sauce to hunger, a more ravishing delight to love, if it had added a new joy to the sunlight, or a more delicious thrill to the springtime, if it had made any of these things a larger part of the common life, there indeed were a triumph to boast of! But so far as one can see, the Victorian era has mostly helped to cover over and push away from men the essential joys of living. Even those who prate so gleefully of its triumphs find chief of these its narcotics. Let us use these 'triumphs' as much as we will, they belong to the unessential background against which the real drama of our life must still be played.

We waste so much of our time on the things that are not truly essential, worrying ourselves and others. Only one thing is really needful, whether with this man we say 'Seek first the kingdom of Heaven,' or with that, 'Make to yourself a perfect body.' It matters little,

because he who pointed to the kingdom of Heaven came eating and drinking, the friend of publicans and sinners, and he who pointed to the body sought solitude and the keenest spiritual austerity. The body includes the soul, and the kingdom of Heaven includes the body. The one thing needful is to seek wisely the fullest organic satisfaction. The more closely we cling to that which satisfies the deepest cravings of the organism, the more gladly we shall let fall the intolerable burden of restraints and licences which are not required for fine living. 'The true ascetic counts nothing his own save only his harp.' It is best to feel light and elate, free in every limb. Every man may have his burden to bear; let him only beware that he bears no burden which is not a joy to carry. If a man cannot sing as he carries his cross he had better drop it.

One has to admit that among English-speaking races at all events the conditions have not been favourable for fine living. The racial elements that have chiefly gone to making the English-speaking peoples have been mainly characterized by energy, and while energy is the prime constituent of living, it is scarcely sufficient for fine living. It is quality rather than quantity of life which finally counts: that is the terrible fact it has taken so long for our race to learn. To plough deep in the furrows of life, to scatter human seed broadcast, to bring to birth your random millions to wilt and fade in the black fog of London alleys or the hot steam of Lancashire mills, casting abroad the residue to wreak the vengeance in their blood on every fair and unspoilt land the world may hold—that is scarcely yet civilization; fishes that spawn in the deep have carried the art of living as far as that. Not energy, even when it shows itself in the blind fury of righteousness, suffices to make civilization, but sincerity, intelligence, sympathy, grace, and all those subtle amenities which go to what we call, perhaps imperfectly enough, humanity—therein more truly lie the virtues of fine living.

It seems not unnecessary to point out that civilization was immortal long before the first Englishman was born.

The races that have given the world the chief examples of fine living have never, save sometimes in their decay, sought quantity rather than quality of life. Some of the world's most eternal cities are its smallest cities. If indeed the reckless excess of human life tended to produce happiness, we might well recognize compensation, and rest content. But, as we know, that is not so. The country that men call the wealthiest is the poorest in humanity when the lives and safeties of its workers are concerned, the law of our righteousness demanding that the weakest shall go to the wall.

One asks oneself if such a condition of things is fatally necessary. If that were so, then indeed the outlook of the world is dark. If the ideal of quantity before quality, of brute energy, of complacent self-righteousness, is for ever to dominate a large part of the world through the English-speaking peoples, then indeed we may die happy that the memory and the vision of better things were yet extant in our time.

Yet surely it is not necessary. If civilization is a tradition, then we may mould that tradition. We are no longer fatally damned into the world. If our fathers ate sour grapes our teeth are not on edge. And even so far as the influence of race counts, there is yet to be set against it the influence of climate. In sunnier English-speaking lands we may already trace a new foreign element of grace and suavity, a deeper insight into the art of living, clearly due in large measure to sky alone. When races change their sky, unlike individuals, they change their dispositions also.

But if we put aside this factor—though it is one of much significance when we recall the accumulating evidence that under proper conditions the white races can live and flourish in hot climes—are there no reasons for thinking that even the English in England may acquire those aptitudes which make not only for the grosser virtues of civilization, but also for those finer qualities which alone make life truly worth living? I think there are.

It is common for pessimists of the baser sort to lament

the relative decay of English supremacy in manufacturing and commercial energy, and to look enviously at the development in these directions of other and younger lands. Such an attitude is in any case inhuman, since these younger countries, especially Germany, are undertaking the cruder tasks of civilization in at once a more scientific and a more humane spirit than we have ever been able to achieve. But it is also uncalled for. As a civilization declines in brutal material energy it gains in spiritual refinement, thus winning more subtle and permanent influence. Egypt in her old age helped to mould young Greece, which in turn as she fell civilized her barbarian Roman conquerors. Of early vigorous Rome nothing remains save the empty echo of heroic virtue; but on the magnificent compost of Roman, Alexandrian, and Byzantine decay we northerners are flourishing even to-day. France has not taken a leading part in the grosser work of modern civilization, but her laboratories of ideas, her workshops of beauty, above all her skill in the fine art of living, have given her an influence over men's minds which swarming millions of pale factory hands and an inconceivable tonnage of mercantile shipping have not so far given to us. But in the very dying down of these grosser energies there is hope, for we may be sure that the forces of life are not yet extinct, and that worthier and subtler ends will float before our eyes as the sculleries and outhouse offices of life are gradually removed elsewhere. England, there can be little doubt, is peculiarly fitted to exercise the finer functions of civilization, if not indeed for the world generally, at all events for those peoples of the globe which are allied to her wholly by language and largely by race. In new countries, in the hurry of cities, in the barren solitude of plains and hills, men have no time or no chance to elaborate the ideals and visions for which they yet thirst; they are not in touch with those great traditions on which alone all worthy and abiding effort must finally rest. The little group of islands hidden in this far corner of the Atlantic, bathed in their everlasting halo of iridescent mist, will be a sacred shrine

for fully half the world. It was the womb in which the world's most energetic race was elaborated; we may be sure that the mother feeling will never die out. Every great name and episode in the slow incubation of the race has its place and association there. Nothing there which is not visibly bathed in that glory which for ever touches us in the far past. In the light of a newer civilization every aspect of it will claim the picturesque beauty of the past. And if, as Ribot has lately asserted, the factories of this century will haunt the minds of future men with the same picturesque suggestion as the ruins of thirteenth-century abbeys to-day haunt us, how rich a treasure England will possess here! Men will come from afar to wander among the ruined factories and furnaces of Lancashire and the Midlands, to gaze at the crumbling charm of those structures once mortared by tears and blood. They will seek the massive whirr of vanished mills at dawn, the prolonged clatter of clogs along the pavement, the flutter of shawls down dark alleys, the echo of brutal forgotten oaths. Their eyes will vainly try to recall the men and women of the Victorian era, huddled together in pathetic self-satisfaction beneath a black pall of smoke and disease and death, playing out the tragedy they called life. A tender melancholy mightier than beauty will cling to the decay of that vanished past.

So far we have been developing the modern applications of that spirit of *simplicity*—of sincere and natural asceticism—which was a chief part of the secret of the Umbrian saint's charm. Francis—as in an earlier age the great Cynics of Greece, and in a later age the New England transcendentalists—enables us to see that asceticism is a natural instinct; he knew that so far from being an effort to crush the body it was an effort to give elation and freedom to the body—*Gaude, frater corpus!*—and that so far from being an appeal to sorrow it was a perpetual appeal to joy. Let us throw aside the useless burdens of life, he seems to say, the things that oppress body and mind—care and wealth and learning and books—that thus we may become free to concentrate ourselves

on the natural things of the world, attaining therein the joy of living. That was the simplicity of Francis. There is another vaguer and subtler aspect of his personality which may be expressed by the allied word *purity*. I mean that clearness and perfect crystalline transparency symbolized by water, in which it has its source. That Francis, with all his fine natural instincts, fully realized all the implications of purity, either on its physical or its spiritual sides, one may well doubt. Purity has never been a great Christian virtue, though ever greatly talked about in Christendom; and while the reliance of Francis on instinct carried him far beyond the age and the faith in which he lived, his indifference to the intellectual grip of things which was part of that natural instinct caused him to be often swayed by the conventions and traditions around him.

It has been well said that purity—which in the last analysis is physical clearness—is the final result of evolution after which Nature is ever striving. When she had attained to the production of naked savage man, a creature no longer encumbered with the care of his fur but freely and constantly bathed by the elements, the perfection of purity was attained. With the wearing of clothes dirt was again brought into the world; and so-called civilized man—except when he possesses leisure for prolonged attention to his person and his clothes—is once more brought to the level of the lower animals, indeed below them, for few animals spend so little time and trouble in attaining cleanliness as garmented man. Pagan classic times, no doubt, cherished a cult of the body which involved a high regard for physical purity. That is the very reason why such purity has never been a Christian or modern virtue. The early Church, feeling profound antagonism to the vices which in classic times were associated with the bath, from the outset frequently denied that there was any need for cleanliness at all. Even so cultured a Christian as Clement of Alexandria would only admit that women should be clean; it was not necessary to men; ‘the bath is to be taken by women for cleanliness and health, by men for health

alone'; in later days the hatred of cleanliness often became quite whole-hearted. Thus it happens that throughout Europe and wherever the influence of Christianity has spread there has been on the whole an indifference to dirt, which is indeed not uncommonly found among degraded peoples untouched by Christianity, but is certainly nowhere else found in association with a grade of culture in most other matters so high. To the Roman the rites of the bath formed one of the very chief occupations of life, and to this race it has happened, as probably to no other ancient race, that their baths have often survived their temples; Rome holds no more memorable relic than the Baths of Caracalla. For the Mohammedan the love of water is part of religion, and the energy and skill with which in its prime Islamic civilization exploited the free and beautiful use of water, are still to be traced throughout southern Spain. In the fine civilization of Japan, again, the pursuit of physical purity has ever been a simple and unashamed public duty, and 'a Japanese crowd,' says Professor Chamberlain, 'is the sweetest in the world.' How different things are in Christendom one need not insist.

It is, however, impossible to overrate the magnitude of the issues which are directly and indirectly enfolded in this question of physical purity. Christianity, with its studied indifference to cleanliness, is, after all, a force from the outside so far as we are concerned; every spontaneous reflective movement of progress involves a reaction against it. On the physical side it is the mark of the better social classes that they are clean, and any striving for betterment among the masses is on the physical side a striving for greater cleanliness. Personal dirtiness is the real and permanent dividing line of classes. The instinctive physical shrinking of the clean person from the dirty person—except at the rare moments when some stronger emotion comes into play—is profound and inevitable. Nearly every form of honest natural vulgarity it is possible to find tolerable and sometimes even charming, but personal physical unwholesomeness remains an impossible barrier. There is

no social equality between the clean and the dirty. The question of physical purity lies at the root of the real democratic problem.

Our attitude towards physical purity inevitably determines our attitude towards the body generally. Without the ideal of cleanliness the body becomes impure. It cannot be shown. Complete concealment becomes the ideal of the impure. And however pure and excellent the body may actually be among ourselves, the traditions of the past remain. The Greeks considered the dislike to nakedness as a mark of Persian and other barbarians; the Japanese—the Greeks of another age and clime—had not conceived the reasons for avoiding nakedness until taught by the lustful and shamefaced eyes of western barbarians. Among ourselves it is 'disgusting' even to-day to show so much as the foot.<sup>1</sup> We certainly could not imitate St. Francis, who broke with his old life by abandoning his father's house and all that he owned, absolutely naked.

There is no real line of demarcation between physical purity and spiritual purity, and the spiritual impurity which marks our civilization is certainly related to the physical impurity which has so long been a tradition of Christendom. Both alike are a consciousness of uncleanness involving a cloak of hypocrisy. We may well recall that *sincerity*, if we carry its history sufficiently far back, is one with physical purity. In some districts of Italy a girl shows that she is chaste by joining in a certain procession and bearing the symbols of purity in her hand. At all events so it was once. All women now walk in the procession of the chaste. In civilized modern life everywhere, indeed, we all walk in that procession, and bright lustful eyes mingled with faint starved eyes both look out incongruously from behind the same monotonously chaste masks. We have

<sup>1</sup> Thus one learns from the newspapers that the offence of wearing sandals has involved ejection even from so great a centre of enlightenment as the Reading Room of the British Museum, while the mere assertion that an actress appeared on the stage with bare legs was so damaging that it involved an action for slander, a public apology, and the payment of 'a substantial sum' in compensation.

forgotten, if we ever knew, that the filthy rags of our righteousness have alike robbed desire of its purity and restraint of its beauty.

How far Francis had instinctively divined the meaning and significance of purity, either on the physical or the moral side, it would be idle to attempt to inquire too precisely. But this delicate and admirable saint brings us into an atmosphere in which the true grace of purity may at least be discerned. His indifference to nakedness, his affection for animals and interest in their loves, his audacious banding together of men and women in one order, his gospel of joy and his everlasting delight in all natural and elementary things, make up a whole inconceivably different from that vision of the world which the great medieval monks, from St. Bernard downwards, spent their lives in maintaining. He brings us to a point at which we are enabled to go beyond his own insight, a point at which we may not only see that asceticism is a simple and natural instinct, not alone recognize the beauty of sex in flowers and birds, but in human creatures also, and learn at last that the finest secrets of purity are known only to the man and woman who have mingled the scent of their sweat with the wild thyme.

At the present moment it may indeed be said that the purity which is one with sincerity presents itself to us more broadly and more clearly in the road of our evolution than it ever has before. Even on the physical side secrecy is becoming impossible, and as the progress of physical science makes matter more and more transparent to our eyes, sincerity must ever become a more stringent and inevitable virtue. And on the psychic side, also, purity—if you will, sincerity—is even more surely imposing itself. Within our own time we have been privileged to see psychology taken from the study into the laboratory and into the market-place. There is no recess of the soul—however intimate, however, as we have been taught to think, disgusting—that is not now opened to the child-like, all-scrutinizing curiosity of science. We may perhaps rebel, but so it is. There

are no mysteries left, no noisome abysses of ignorance veiled by the pretty mists of innocence. In the face of this tendency private vice must ever become more difficult; we are learning to detect the whole man in the slightest quiver of his muscles. Thus, again, purity becomes yet more stringent and inevitable. We gaze at all facts now, and find none too mean or too sacred for study. But it is fatal to gaze at certain facts if you cannot gaze purely. In that lies the final triumph of purity. We may rebel, I repeat, but so it is, so it must remain.

I do not wish to insist here on the moral aspects of purity—grave and profound as these are—for I am dealing less with the social aspects of simplicity and purity than with what I would call their religious aspects, their power to win our personal peace and joy. How far we are to-day, at all events in England, from the simplicity and purity of Francis in the search for peace and joy is brought home very clearly to those who have ever made it their business to observe the masses of our population in their finest moments of would-be peace and joy. Many years ago a curious fascination drew me every Bank Holiday to haunt the structure and grounds of the Crystal Palace, near which I then lived. The vision of humanity in the mass, when it has lost the interest which individuals possess, and taken on the more abstract interest belonging to the species, has for me at least always had a certain attraction. But these Bank Holiday crowds had a more special interest. They summed up and wrote large the characteristics of a nation. These thirty thousand persons belonging to the class which by virtue of greater fertility furnishes the ultimate substance of all classes, seemed to reveal to me the heart of my own people. The perpetual, violent movement, the meaningless shouts and yells, the haggard bands of young women standing in the corridors to tramp wearily a treadmill variation of the Irish jig until they fell into an almost hypnotic state, the wistful, weary looks in the dull eyes of these seekers, rushing on among the plaster images

of old serene gods, seeing nothing but always moving, moving they knew not whither, faint, yet pursuing they knew not what—the whole of the northern soul, the English soul above all, was there. On! on! never mind how or where: that seemed the perpetual cry of these pale, lean, awkward youths and women. And I would think of the bands of boys and girls in the medieval crusading epidemics, starting from the north with the same eyes, asking for Jerusalem at every town, soon to be slain or drowned in unknown obscure ways. Or sometimes I recalled the bas-reliefs in the museum at Naples—that most fascinating of museums—which show how the failing Greek genius concentrated its now spiritualized energy in the forms of Dionysus and his maenads. With eager face grown languid he leans on the great thyrsus, which bends beneath his weight, and in front his maenads, upheld by the ardour of the search, with heads thrown back and flying hair, still beat their cymbals desperately, seeking, until they have grown almost unconscious of search, a far-away joy, an ever-fleeting ideal, of which they have at last forgotten the name. And so for hours my gaze would be fixed on the pathetic vulgarity of those terrible crowds.

Of late I have been able to see how the other vigorous and reproductive race—the race that chiefly shares with England the partition of the uncivilized world—comports itself at its great festivals. The Russians are a profoundly and consciously religious race, and I recall above all the unforgettable scene at the ancient monastery at Troitsa, near Moscow, as it appeared on the festival of the Assumption, when pilgrims, women mostly, in every variety of gay costume, crowded thither on foot from all parts of Russia. There, at length within the walls of that monastery-fortress on the hill at Sergievo, they fervently kiss the sacred relics, and having been served by the dark-robed, long-haired monks with soup and black bread, they lie down and fall asleep, placid and motionless, on all sides. Young women, grasping the pilgrim's staff, a little droop sometimes in the lips, yet with large brawny thighs beneath the short skirts,

stolid great-breasted women of middle age, wrinkled old women decked in their ancient traditional adornments—all this gay-coloured multitude fling themselves down to sleep on the church steps, around its walls, over the silent graves, heaped up anywhere that the march of on-coming pilgrims leaves a little space, tired maenads filled for once with the wine their souls craved, colossal images of immense appeasement. It is the orgy of a strong, silent, much-suffering race, with all the charm of childhood yet upon it, too humane to be ferocious in its energy.

We English subordinate the sensory to the motor side of life, and even find our virtue in so doing. To live in the present, to suffer and to enjoy our actual evil and good, facing it squarely and making our account with it—that we cannot do: that was the way of the Greeks and Romans; it is not our way. We are ever poets and idealists, down to the dregs of life's cup. We must strive and push, using our muscles to narcotize our senses, ever contemptuous of the people who more fully exercise their senses to grasp the world around them. For the sake of this muscular auto-intoxication we miss the finest moments life has to give. The Japanese masses, who fix their popular festival for the day when the cherry tree is in finest bloom, and take their families into the woods to sip tea and pass the day deliciously with the flowers, are born to a knowledge of that mystery which Francis painfully conquered. The people to whom such an art of enjoyment is the common practice of the common people may possibly not succeed in sending ugly and shoddy goods to clothe and kill the beautiful skins of every savage tribe under heaven, but we need not fear to affirm that they have learnt secrets of civilization which are yet hidden from us in England.

The worth of a civilization, we may be very sure, is more surely measured by its power to multiply among the common people the possibility of having and enjoying such moments than by the mileage of cotton goods its factories can yield, or even by the output of Bibles

its weary factory hands can stitch. We can know no moments of finer or purer exhilaration, whether we breathe the bright air of Australian solitudes and watch the virgin hills lie fold within fold beneath the stainless sunlight, or in the dimmer and damper air of this old country recline on Surrey heights by the great beeches of the old deserted Pilgrim's Way and meditate of the past. There are few things sweeter or more profitable than to lie on the velvety floor of a little pine wood on a forgotten southern height in May, where tall clumps of full-flowered rhododendra blend with the fragrant gorse which spreads down to the sparkling sea, and to throw aside everything and dream. In such moments at such spots we reach the summits of life, learning those secrets of asceticism which Francis knew so well.

Thus by his words and by his deeds Francis still has his significance for us. He brought asceticism from the cell into the fields, and became the monk of Nature. One may doubt whether, as Renan thought, the Song to the Sun is the supreme modern expression of the religious spirit, but without doubt it gathers up vaguely and broadly the things that most surely belong to our eternal peace in this world. That it is the simplest and naturelest things to which eternal joy belongs is the divine secret which makes Francis a prince among saints, and it was by a true inspiration that he dedicated the chief utterance of his worship of joy in life to the sun.

If it should ever chance that a sane instinct of worship is born again on earth among civilized men, let us be sure that nothing will seem more worthy of worship than the sun, the source of that energy out of which we and all our ideals ultimately spring. Some day, again, perhaps, men will greet the rising of the sun at the summer solstice on the hills with music and song and dance, framing their most exquisite liturgical art to the honour of that supreme source of all earthly life. It was natural, doubtless, that at some stage of human progress new-found moral conceptions should intrude themselves as worthier of human worship. But even

the cross itself—if not its great rival the lunar Mohammedian crescent—was first the symbol of sun-worship, of the source of life. We may yet rescue that sacred symbol, now fallen to such sorrowful uses, bearing it onwards to sunnier heights of wholeness and joy.

Religions are many, and in the mass they seem to us—blinded to the social functions that religions originally subserved—endlessly harsh and cruel. But in their summits, in their finest personalities, they are simple and natural enough, and alike lovely. Look at the Jesus of the Gospels, the friend of publicans and sinners, the marriage guest at Cana, so tender-hearted in the house of Simon, the author of those sayings of quintessential natural wisdom preserved to us in that string of adorable pearls men call the Sermon on the Mount. Look at the prophet of Islam, when gazing back at the earth as it seemed to recede into the distance at the end of his long career, he counted as first among its claims the simple natural joys: ‘I love your world because of its women and its perfumes.’ And we remember the depths to which Christianity and Mohammedanism have alike fallen. Look, again, at Francis, who in no prim academical sense may be called the first modern apostle of sweetness and light, a man who found joy unspeakable in inhaling the fragrance of flowers, in watching the limpid waters of mountain streams, and whose most characteristic symbol is the soaring lark he loved so well. And we remember that a century later even Chaucer, that sweetest and most sympathetic of poets, can only speak of his friar in words that seem to be of inevitable and unconscious irony. For every religion begins as the glorious living flame of a lovely human personality—or so it seems—and continues as a barren cinder-heap. As such, as a Church, whether pagan or Christian, it can scarcely afford us either light or heat.

Why, one asks oneself, is it necessary for me to choose between Paul and Petronius? Why pester me on the one hand with the breastplate of faith and the helmet of salvation, on the other with the feast of Trimalchio and the kisses of Giton? ‘A plague of both your houses!’

We are not barbarians, tortured by a moral law, neither are we all pagans with unmixed instincts of luxury. We are the outcome of a civilization in which not only has what we are pleased to regard as the sensual fury of the ape and tiger become somewhat chastened, but the ascetic fury of the monk and priest also. Let the child of the south feast still in the house of Trimalchio with unwounded conscience, if he can; we will not forbid him. And let the barbarian still flagellate his tense rebellious nerves with knotted spiritual scourges, if only so can he draw out the best music they yield; we will be the first to applaud. But most of us have little to do with the one or the other. The palmiest days of both ended a thousand years ere we were born. Before the threshold of our modern world was reached Francis sang in the sun and smiled away the spectres that squatted on the beautiful things of the earth. On the threshold of our world Rabelais built his Abbey of Thélème, in whose rule was but one clause, *Fay ce que vouldras*, a rule which no pagan or Christian had ever set up before, because never before, except as involved in the abstract conceptions of philosophers, had the thought of voluntary co-operation, of the unsolicited freedom to do well, appeared before European men.

What have we to do also, it may be added, with modernity, with the fashions of an hour? It is well, indeed, to live in the present, whatever that present may be, but sooner or later we are pushed back, weary or disillusioned, on the inspiration of our own personality. All the activity of Francis only wrought a plague of grey friars, scattered like dust on the highways of Europe. But Francis still remains, and all things wither into nothingness in the presence of one natural man who dared to be himself. The best of us can scarcely hope to be more successful than Francis. But at least we may be ourselves. 'Whatever happens I must be emerald': that, Antoninus said, is the emerald's morality; that must remain our finest affirmation.

Our feet cling to the earth, and it is well that we should learn to grip it closely and nakedly. But the earth

beneath us is not all of Nature; there are instincts within us that lead elsewhere, and it is part of the art of living to use naturally all those instincts. In so doing the spiritual burdens which the ages have laid upon us glide away into thin air.

And for us, as for him who wrote *De Imitatione Christi*—however far differently—there are still two wings by which we may raise ourselves above the earth, simplicity, that is to say, and purity.

## AN OPEN LETTER TO BIOGRAPHERS

DEAR SIRS,

During recent years I have spent many silent hours in your company. These hours have passed more or less pleasantly. It is because I can only look back upon them with mingled satisfaction that I venture to address you now.

Let me explain, in the first place, that I sought your society as a student of that rare and marvellous human variation which we vaguely call 'genius'; I desire to collect, so far as this may be possible, the material which will enable me to state some fairly definite conclusions concerning the complex nature and causes of genius. You will observe that I may thus be described as your ideal reader. I come to you, not to pass away my idle moments, nor because I look up to this religious leader or follow that politician or am the devotee of any musician or painter or poet; I come to you with the challenge to produce your finest revelation concerning a certain unique personality in whatsoever manner that personality may have been manifested. For you all profess that you are striving to set forth such unique personalities, and I have sought from you in vain the greatest revelation of all: 'The Life of an Average Man.' You undertake to tell me of these unique lives, and with my head full of questions I take up my pencil to note down or underline your answers—I have often flung away that idle superfluous pencil.

This is why I venture to approach you collectively now. I have long listened to you in respectful silence. The years have rendered my respect somewhat critical, and I trust you will pardon the remarks with which I now break my silence.

You do not, I have said, tell me a fair portion of the things I desire to know. That fact I shall try to drive

home later. I wish first to point out that you do tell me a great many things that I have no desire to know. You will tell me the lives of the men your hero knew; you will tell me his commonplace remarks concerning the commonplace people he met, and the towns he sojourned in; you are seldom tired of telling me in fullest detail of the honours that were showered on his declining years. But all this is not *biography*. And there is a more subtle error of commission into which you frequently fall headlong. You assume the function of the historian. Now a biographer is not a historian. It is quite true that men make history. But we cannot study the individual man in the same way as we study the product of many men's activity. The method which is best fitted for investigating the Reformation is not best fitted for studying Luther's portrait; the adequate biographer of Laud will scarcely be the adequate historian of the English Revolution. The better equipped a writer may be for the one task, the more badly equipped he will be for the other. The whole tone and touch must be different, and much practice in the one medium will no more give skill in the other than practice on the organ will make a man an accomplished pianist. But it is by practice on the organ of history that the most conspicuous among you have usually come to the piano of biography. And you often forget that you are not at the organ still. Some of you are now engaged on the *Dictionary of National Biography*. It is a useful and fascinating task; when complete there will be no such delightful work of its size in the language. But in any volume of it, I can turn from 'biography' to 'biography' which contains not one line of genuine biography to the page; instead you have given us slices of misplaced history. Clearly you have seldom asked yourselves: WHAT IS BIOGRAPHY? You have simply assumed that it is the part a man plays in the history of civilization. But that is to stultify both biography and history. In history we can never see truly from the standpoint of a single actor, and biography is thus made mere bad history.

Undoubtedly any great man bears with him the *matériaux pour servir* in the making of the history of civilization—whether in his deeds or his discoveries or his art-products—but the cataloguing of these is something beside the purpose of biography, just as the description of the face of the earth is beside the astronomer's purpose, however intimately the earth may hang to the sun. True, it is not impossible to trace the life and soul of an artist in his work. But this is only done by a special keen precision of touch such as Leynardi has expended on the dissection of the *Divina Commedia*, and not by the methods of the commentator who tells me all about every person or place Dante has mentioned for no better reason than because Dante has mentioned it. To write history, whether of a nation or of civilization, is to write a complex whole in which the products of many men's activities have fermented together to yield something which is as far from the minds and lives of the men who made it as Christianity is from the mind and life of Jesus. To describe the products of a single man's activity, whenever it is worth doing at all, is to write prolegomena to history. To describe the birth and growth of a great man as he was in his real nature, physical and psychical—as a grape-cluster on the tree of life and not as a drop of alcohol in the vat of civilization—that is biography.

I have it against you, then, that you who are charged with this high task are perpetually seeking to merge it in a lower or at all events a different task. But I would content myself if, after all, you really enabled me to gain a picture of the man.

I would gird up my loins, fling to right and to left the extraneous matter that you pile up around me, and make straight for the vital facts. But they are not there! Many and many a voluminous so-called 'biography' I can compress into a couple of pages, and likely enough even these pages will reveal less than the vivid laconic portraits that Carlyle set down as by lightning flash of the men he but passingly met. Thus the authorized and only life of Young, not published until

many years after his death, so far as really salient and pregnant facts are concerned can be compressed into six lines; the one supremely illuminative fact in it is the reproduction of his portrait. Now here is one of the most brilliant and versatile heroes of science that this country ever produced, a man who ranks with Harvey and Newton and Darwin, and the best you can do is to lose for ever the chance of knowing the manner of man that he was in body and spirit: there remains only the image of the beautiful childlike face, with the sweet mouth and the large eager eyes, as Lawrence painted it. In every man of genius a new strange force is brought into the world. The biographer is the biologist of this new life. I come to you to learn the origins of this tremendous energy, the forces that gave it impetus and that drove it into one channel rather than another. I will gladly recognize that nowadays you generally tell me of the hero's ancestors; formerly you told me nothing of the mothers of great men, seldom even the name, and that is one of the most hopeless *lacunae* in the right understanding of genius. How gladly would I know more definitely the race and nature of the mother of that saint who for so many centuries won the love of Englishmen, and whose shrine is furrowed deep by the knees of Chaucer's pilgrims! And yet while race and family are certainly an enormous factor in the making of every man, I would wish to point out to you that they are not omnipotent—for then the hero's brothers and sisters would always be heroes too—so that you need not trouble yourselves or us with the trivial details of the lives of the ancestors. But it would be well if you could tell us something of the stars that shone in the making of the individual life. We desire to know the influences, physical and moral, which surrounded the period of his conception, the welfare of his pre-natal life, whether he was born naturally and in due season. All the facts were once known in the area of the hero's family circle; some at least among you could have told them to us and so have made many things plain which now remain obscure. Rarely indeed

have you done so, rarely even have you recognized that such questions are a part of knowledge. Yet the fate of all of us is in large measure sealed at the moment we leave the womb. Next in importance comes the curve of life that has its summit at puberty and ends with the completion of adolescence; whatever else there is to make is made then. The machine has been created; during these years it is wound up to perform its work in the world. What follows after counts for something but always for less. You cannot tell us too much real biography — the description of life — concerning these youthful years. Even the detailed account of the games and amusements devised by the young hero, such as Nietzsche's sister and biographer has written down for us, are welcome when obtainable; for the after-life of the man is often little more than the same games played more tragically on a larger field. After the age of twenty your task becomes easier and more obvious; after thirty, if so far you have fulfilled that task, what is there further left to tell? The rest is but the liberation of a mighty spring, the slow running down of energy. The man recedes to give place to his deeds, whether such deeds be the assault of great fortresses or the escalade of mighty sentences. There is the same heroic effort and achievement, whether on the walls of Jerusalem when Godfrey scaled them or on Flaubert's sofa at Rouen.

But, as I have already tried to point out, mere chatter about the deeds is not what we come for to you the biographers. If the deeds are real they will speak for themselves in history or verse or other shape that men will not let die. When I want to see Velasquez's pictures I go not to you but to Madrid. But if you could only tell me how he came to paint them! When you are dealing with the adult hero in the midst of his work the one great service you can do, and that which is your most proper function, is to tell us, not about this work, but about the conditions under which it was achieved. If you have so far done your task, we know the nature of the force; now we need to know by what channels

it was manifested. I have it against you here that—  
save incidentally, partially, often hypocritically—you  
seldom attempt this part of your task. You find it so  
much easier to ramble on about the work and its recep-  
tion than to describe the man's method of doing it,  
and what hindered or helped him in the doing. Often  
enough you like to represent him as doing it in a coat  
of mail impervious to the shafts of human weaknesses.  
You are well content when you have taken some real  
man—let us say, old Abraham Lincoln, a real man if  
ever there was one—and in the course of a ponderous  
authorized biography bleached and starched and ironed  
him into a tailor's dummy. You seem to me like the  
proverbial valet for whom his master is no hero. The  
hero of the battle-field may be a coward to his dentist;  
the man who has faced a revolution of socialistic thought  
may be too timid to walk down Lisson Grove.<sup>1</sup> These  
things do not attenuate heroism; they are part of it.  
You cannot have force in two places at the same time;  
and you must know a man's weakness before you truly  
know his strength. It is often in the 'weakness'—as  
the valet-moralist counts weakness—that the source of  
the hero's strength lies, the weakness which, as Hinton  
used to put it, was the path of least resistance through  
which the aboriginal energy of Nature passed into the  
man. The recital of the weaknesses in detail you can  
spare if you see good reason—and there is good reason  
why a biography should not be a *chronique scandaleuse*  
—but if you refuse to note them you are false to any  
intelligible conception of a biographer's function, and  
you have produced a lie which is as immoral as every  
untrue picture of life necessarily is. Michael Angelo's  
Platonic affection for men went to the chiselling of his  
sculpture, Victor Hugo's hollow domestic life was not  
unconnected with his ideals of celestial purity, literature  
is full of the unavowed confessions of opium-eaters and  
wine-bibbers, and so all along. It corrupts the tree of  
life at the core to deny such associations, to point only  
to the leaves and flowers that men call 'moral,' to

<sup>1</sup> I had a real man in mind—a distinguished thinker.

ignore the roots which—through your hypocrisy, it may well be—they call dirty and ‘immoral.’ Nothing shall induce you to admit that your Achilles had a vulnerable heel?—And yet, if you rightly consider the matter, without that heel Achilles would have been no hero at all.

I have referred once or twice to the ‘biographer’s function.’ Sometimes I wonder how many of you have ever considered what a biographer’s function is. With what equipment have you usually come to your task? Even the question I feel you may regard as an insult. Yet, consider. The novelist only attains skill in his work after failure, perhaps a long series of failures like Balzac or Zola, rarely indeed at a bound. The novelists whose force has developed in a night have perished in a night. In the matter of biographies we possess what we should possess in the matter of novels if few novelists produced more than the early bungles of their prentice hands. And yet a novelist has undertaken the incomparably easier task of recording the lives of the simple puppets of his own brain. Remember, again, that biography does not stand alone as a branch of research. Beside biography, the life of an individual, we have ethnography, the life of a community. To the making of a great ethnographer—an Adolf Bastian, let us say—there are needed preliminary training in biology and psychology, an immense knowledge of literature, laborious research during journeys among remote savage peoples, perpetual attention to petty details. But should a biographer willingly admit that the life of a community is better worth serious study than the life of its greatest men? Go to the British Museum or the Anthropological Institute and look at those admirable series of photographs in which Mr. Portman has reproduced every step in the processes of life among the Andamanese, for instance in the fashioning of a bow and arrow; or see, if you can, the delightful photographs in which Mr. Im Thurn has caught the beautiful brown-skinned Indians of Guiana in every stage of their work and especially their play. Is not the fashioning of a lyric to pierce the hearts of men for ever as well

worth study as the making of an arrow? The child of genius gathering shells on the shores of eternity as interesting as the games of savages? Yet few have thought it worth while to inquire how Burns achieved his songs or Newton his theories. It was enough to utter the blessed word 'Inspiration!' and lean comfortably back. Not so have the physiologists solved the mystery of physical respiration.

Biography, then, is strictly analogous to ethnography, the one being the picture of the life of a race, the other the intimate picture of the life of a man. Now both the one and the other are branches of applied psychology, a strict method of scientific research. There was a time not so long ago when psychology was not a strict method of research and when any arm-chair philosopher sat down to write the history of the general soul as light-heartedly as the biographer still sits down to write the history of the individual soul. So far as pure psychology at least is concerned, those days are past. With the establishment by Wundt some twenty years ago of the first psychological laboratory, psychology for the first time became a science; and in Germany and the United States—the two countries to which we now look for light on this new science—the work of men like Münsterberg, Preyer, Stanley Hall, Jastrow, and Scripture has taught us how to obtain by exact methods a true insight into the processes of the average human mind. No man now ventures to call himself a psychologist unless he is familiar with the methods and results of these workers. A few psychologists in Italy and France have pushed such methods into the investigation of exceptional men, and like Ottolenghi have examined the visual field of certain complaisant men of genius, or like Binet have traced out with remarkably interesting results the ways in which certain dramatists—Dumas, Goncourt, Sardou, Meilhac, and especially De Curel—conceive and write their plays. But how often does any such attempt, on however imperfect material, to bring us near to the heart and brain of a great creative personality form part of what the biographer presumes

to call 'Life'? How many biographers so much as know that they are—may the real students forgive me!—psychologists, and that the rules of their art have in large part been laid down.

I am quite sure, my dear sirs, that you will instinctively feel that this is stuff and nonsense. You have your duty to the public who pay you handsomely for doing it speedily, for the public has an uneasy feeling that the great man's fame will turn sour if not consumed off-hand. And then you have your duty towards your hero's personal friends and relations who will only help you on condition that you produce a figure that is smooth, decorous, conventional, *bien coiffé*, above all, closely cut off below the bust, such a figure as we may gaze at without a blush in the hairdresser's window. And at bottom, you may admit at last, you distrust both yourself and your audience, and will not publicly dare to take any bull by the horns.

Well, there is no doubt truth in this; I must needs believe there is, since you so solemnly and constantly repeat it between the lines of your books. Yet, after all, there are a few men whose fame has not died in a night, and who remain alive after their friends and relations have turned to dust. It is in the case of such men that I question the wisdom of sacrificing the interests of the world to the interests of a fleeting generation. Is it not worth while to wait five years, or even fifty years, or for the matter of that five hundred years, and at the end to possess the everlasting inspiring record of a master-spirit? Is it not worth while to be accounted a fool for a century, like the man who wrote according to his means the best of biographies, and to become immortal at last? It is the man who is a valet at soul who shudders at the possibility of possessing Boswell's *Life of Jesus*, or Eckermann's *Conversations with Homer*, or Froude's edition of Shakespeare's *Reminiscences* and who creates an atmosphere which renders such achievements immensely difficult. At the same time this atmosphere renders possible a kind of hero so rare in the world, the Hero as Biographer.

That is the final point on which I bring this letter to a conclusion. The writing of a biography is no facile task; it is the strenuous achievement of a lifetime, only to be accomplished in the face of endless obstacles and unspeakable prejudice. I beg you to consider it. Then the ideal reader of coming centuries will not sigh so wearily as I sigh when he hears that Mr. So-and-So is engaged on a biography of our eminent poet, novelist, or philosopher, This, That, or The Other; that every endeavour will be made to bring out this biography while the sense of the loss we have sustained is still so strongly felt; and that it is confidently expected that the large first edition will be bought up before publication. Not so was any great book born into the world.

## MONSERRAT

### I

THE mystic shrine that was the home of the Holy Grail, borne away from human strife to a remote corner of the world, long haunted the medieval mind, and when in modern times that legend again emerges in the crowning achievement of Wagner's genius, the Grail is still preserved by a religious order at Monsalvat, in Gothic Spain, not far from the land of the Moslems.

The northerners who dreamed of Monsalvat in their moments of fervent devotion or romantic exaltation had heard a rumour, but for the most part they knew little or nothing of its kernel of fact. Yet the rumour itself is the most potent evidence of the world-wide fascination which the ancient mountain shrine of Monserrat exerted over the imaginations of men for more than a thousand years, and, indeed, still exerts even to-day. It is in vain that one climbs the heights of Monserrat with memories of Amfortas and the 'pure fool.' When we have made our way up, beyond even the shrine and the monastery, to the great ravine which is said to have rent the summit of the mountain at the moment of the crucifixion, and when we have passed the fantastic row of rocky pinnacles to which the name of 'Guardians of the Holy Grail' has been assigned, we have seen all that there is to connect the real Monserrat with the legendary Monsalvat.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps we should be well content that so sublime a symbol has long been borne away to an invisible home, and that the Holy Grail should have its sole and immortal shrine in the human imagination.

But the real and still living legend of Monserrat,

<sup>1</sup> It may be worth noting that not very far away from Monserrat, in Valencia Cathedral, there is a chalice, the Santa Caliz—carved out of sardonyx, and belonging to the Imperial Roman epoch—which is traditionally held to be the cup used at the Last Supper.

though of no profound imaginative significance, has yet sufficed to give an incomparable spiritual halo to a spot which, even if it had not become a shrine of faith, must always be a shrine of Nature. It is said that St. Luke—by tradition regarded as the most accomplished of the first Christians—once fashioned a wooden image of the Virgin Mary. Whoever the sculptor may have been, however, it seems to be agreed that the image, still venerated here, was counted as sacred at a period anterior even to legend. In the eighth century—and how much earlier it is impossible to say—monks would seem to be settled in the mountain, and on the coming of the Moors to have concealed the image in a grotto and fled. Towards the end of the ninth century—when the history of Monserrat, heightened by legend, really opens—the image was accidentally discovered by shepherds. Nuns were then planted here, soon to give place to Benedictine monks from the great abbey of Ripoll. Through many vicissitudes the Virgin of Monserrat always emerged triumphant; early in the fifteenth century her shrine, from being only a priory under Ripoll, became an independent abbey. From the first, probably, it was the haunt of hermits. The serrated mountain was as naturally formed to be the home of hermits as the devout Spaniard is formed to make a hermit; every hermit could here find his solitary eyrie in the cliff over the great plain, and no hermitage was ever without its inmate. Slowly, too, as the fame of the Lady of Monserrat grew, a mighty army of pilgrims began to march up the winding path to this high shrine, to present their offerings and to receive the hospitality of the monks. In the sixteenth century, it is said, they numbered half a million a year. Kings and princes and nobles joined in the procession; once a queen, Violante, the wife of Don Juan I, climbed up barefoot; Charles V came here nine times; a great conqueror, Don John of Austria, came here to lay at the feet of the Virgin the spoils of Lepanto and to cover the whole church with gold; most memorable visit of all, it was here that the soldier Loyola came to bid farewell to

earthly camps, to spend the night before the Virgin, to leave his sword on her altar, to watch over his new spiritual weapons like a knight of chivalry in *Amadis de Gaul*, consecrating himself as a soldier of the Church—the first general of the best-organized and most famous army that has ever fought in her service.

It was not alone in the spiritual sphere that Monserrat stood forth resplendent above the world around. Like every great Benedictine monastery, it was a focus of work and enlightenment. Its abbots were sometimes fine architects, and they knew also where to find the best sculptors and craftsmen in Spain to beautify their splendid Byzantine church. They founded a school of music. They set up a famous printing-press when printing was still a novelty in the world. If men brought here in profusion their precious things for love of the Virgin, the guardians of her shrine in the days of its prosperity were never unmindful of their own responsibilities. The gifts of natural site and scenery, antiquity and legend, the adoration of a large part of Europe, the skill and energy of its own monks, thus combined to render Monserrat a shrine of almost unparalleled magnificence, although from its natural position it always preserved a certain aristocratic aloofness, and never enjoyed the immense vulgar fame throughout Christendom of the other great Spanish shrine, that of St. James of Compostela.

Then at last in the early years of the nineteenth century came the War of Independence. Monserrat is a natural fortress—a tempting one, moreover, to seize, for the French scented a rich booty. They climbed the mountain, slew or dispersed the monks, trampled down the shrine, melted or carried off its precious things. What the French left was overturned by that internal revolution, a few years later, which made every great religious house in Spain the picturesque ruin which we see it to-day. When Ford visited Monserrat he found it 'an abomination of desolation,' in which it was hard even to secure a resting-place.

Now once again, though its old splendour has departed,

Monserrat is alive. The great church has been restored; large buildings cluster around to furnish the pilgrim and the visitor with a lodging that is, nominally at all events, free; the old shrines are well kept, and the Brothers who guard this ancient home of Our Lady have re-established the School of Music. The Virgin of Monserrat is still the battle-cry of the Catholics of Catalonia. At a meeting held not long ago in Barcelona to protest against the law of association proposed by the Liberal Government, amid cries of 'Viva España!' and 'Viva Cataluña!' arose the opposing Catholic cry of 'Viva la Virgen de Monserrat!' For there is an indestructible vitality in this mountain shrine. It was once the Roman Estorcil and a temple of Venus. Even before that, we may well believe, some Iberian deity was reverenced here. Many a faith may have alighted on this misty height and silently winged its way into the darkness when the twilight of its godhead arrived. And if in the ages to come a new faith should arise in the world, a new goddess embody the human dream of adorable grace, we may be sure she will be worshipped at Monserrat.

## II

Nowadays not only is Monserrat a centre of activity once more, but the path of the pilgrim has even been made easy. When first I saw Monserrat from afar, fifteen years ago, there was no way of access to the monastery but by the ancient though excellent roads made by the monks. Since then the ascetic Spaniard has so far condescended to modern ideas of comfort as to make a little mountain railway from Monistrol up almost to the very spot below the monastery where, as the inscription shows—'Aquí se hizo inmóvil la Santa Imagen en 880'—the image of the Virgin on its discovery refused to be borne away from her mountain, and so indicated the magnificent site on which the monastery was to be erected.

At last, one day early in May, I stepped into the train

which was to bear me beyond the River Llobregat, and so up the face of the mountain, somewhat awed at the prospect of at last visiting a sacred spot towards which my thoughts had so often been set. I was at first surprised to find that my only companions were two loving young couples belonging to the people. It had not occurred to me that the shrine of Our Lady of Monserrat should be a fitting place for a honeymoon. I had forgotten, what I was soon to realize, that in the simple, ardent, and austere temperament of the Spaniard love and religion are two forms of passion that naturally merge into each other, and that the conditions for gratifying the one instinct may very well be adequate to gratify the other; in Spain a holiday is still, as it once was with us in the north, a holy day.

Imagine a vaster and more gracious Gibraltar, piled and clustered masses of conglomerate rock, with bushes and small trees growing on the ledges and in the clefts, rising — sheerly, it seems in the distance — from an immense undulating plain through which winds the River Llobregat, dotted along its banks with towns and villages, while in the distance lie the hills, and far beyond, dim and shadowy, the snow-capped Pyrenees, of which Monserrat itself is really a separate outlying eminence. Too far from any strategic position to have played a great part in history as a fortress, Monserrat has been a spiritual citadel, and this holy mountain with its divine lady and her servants has dominated the land from before the dawn of history.

The little train has arrived, and I follow in the wake of the two young couples, for whom the way seems not unfamiliar, to an office, where a young man, a lay Brother, enters my name and place of abode in a book, and without further question hands a key to another similarly habited youth, who, with two sheets and a towel over his arm, precedes me to a barrack-like building bearing the name of Santa Teresa de Jesus, unlocks the door of a third-story room, and leaves me absolutely and in every respect to my own devices for the three days during which Our Lady

of Monserrat grants me the hospitality of her lodging.

I look around the little whitewashed cell which for this brief space will be all my own. It is scrupulously clean and neat, furnished with absolute simplicity. I note—an indication that I am not actually within a duly constituted monastery—that there are two little beds, separated from the rest of the cell by a brilliant curtain, the one touch of colour and gaiety my cell reveals. A little table, a chair, a basin, an empty water-pot, and a candlestick without a candle, complete the equipment entrusted to my care. When I have made my bed, taken my water-pot to fill it below, and bought a candle at the provision-store which supplies those pilgrims who find the one restaurant here beyond their means, I feel at last free to put the key of my cell in my pocket and give all my thoughts to Monserrat.

It is now evening; from the ledge on which the little group of buildings stands, the final summits of Monserrat, above the monastery, are to-night wreathed with delicate mist. As I wander up and down the silent deserted terrace, in front of the small group of buildings which makes Monserrat an abode of the living, and breathe the exquisite air, and gaze out into the mysterious depths below, or up at the rocky pinnacles which alone remain bright, I feel at last that I have indeed reached the solemn shrine that I have long dreamed of finding at Monserrat. The absolute peace, the absence of any sign of life, becomes at last a little puzzling; but the puzzle is solved when I make my way in the gloom to the church, and pushing open a little door, find myself amid the scattered worshippers in the obscurity of the great church. The gloom here, indeed, is far deeper than outside; the fine Spanish instinct for devotion has always known, what in the north the glorification of light has made it so hard for us to realize, that a light subdued to gloom alone befits the attitude of prayer or of adoration; that a church is the last place where we should wish to become acutely

conscious of the petty details which mark the individualities of our fellow-creatures. An atmosphere of mystery, a vaguely glowing splendour that envelops and conceals all the world's distinctions, alone befits the attitude of approach to the supreme mystery.

It is the hour of *Oracion*, almost the only hour of the day when the church is open to the pilgrims, and the exquisite voices of the boys are chanting the *Ave Maria*, with the restrained and deliberate modulation that comes of good training, as I grope to a seat. If the glare of day could penetrate the church, it might reveal, one feels, a painfully brilliant spectacle of tinselled tawdry, which now is subdued to a vague shimmer of gold, setting forth the massive proportions of the aisleless Romanesque church, while the scattered lamps the better emphasize the duly ordered candles that burn in the shrine, high up in the apse above the altar, enclosing the sacred image. In this atmosphere of mellowed spiritual exaltation one's mood blends insensibly and harmoniously with that of the unceasing company of human souls which for more than a thousand years has climbed up to pray in this mountain. Here at last the pilgrimage to Monserrat is accomplished.

### III

Sleep is quickly banished by the air of this height, and to arise at five in the fresh morning and stroll along the mountain paths when few or none are yet stirring is the best way to realize that Monserrat, far from being the mere home of the *Santa Imagen*, was a shrine of Nature's making long before it became a shrine of man's.

It seems to be the special distinction of Monserrat that it achieves the sheer altitude, the solemnity, the aloofness of a mountain, and yet retains a certain accessibility and amenity which brings it into communion with humanity. Within certain narrow limits its aspects are infinitely varied—every time revealing some new and impressive spectacle of jutting promontory, or serried and mighty rock columns, or dark ravine—but its main

characteristics remain uniform. It is always a huge rock reared high in the clouds, but trees and plants in immense variety grow almost to the summits; pleasant paths lie in every direction, and for the fairly intelligent wanderer no guide is necessary. There are no hardships the pilgrim here need surmount. Now and again one hears the distant sound of youthful laughter; for the note of Monserrat is one of laughter as well as of prayer, and on this keen and radiant height, which seems in a very literal sense so near the sky, it strikes no discord.

The paths that wind round the mountain towards the summit reveal here and there a neglected chapel, a cave that was once inhabited, a ruined hermitage. Every such spot once had its hermit, and when he died there were always eager candidates for the vacant post. Very sacred is the little cave associated with the name of Garin—a ninth-century saint whose sins were grievous and his life here, it is said, of awful austerity. 'It is a common and indeed a commendable custom among the Spaniards,' wrote James Howell from Madrid, in 1622, in his *Familiar Letters*, 'when he hath passed his Grand Climacterie to make a voluntary Resignation of Offices, be they never so great and profitable, and sequestering and weaning themselves, as it were, from all mundane Negotiations and Incumbrances, to retire to some Place of Devotion, and spend the Residue of their Days in Meditation.'<sup>1</sup> Very certainly, however, the lives of the world-weary men who came to spend their last years here were not usually without their joys. Even this cave of Garin's, small as it is, stands in an admirably chosen spot and commands a magnificent view. It is impossible not to believe that the men who retired from the conflicts and anxieties of the world to this serene height were not entirely moved, as it seemed to the ignorant mob, by an unquenchable thirst for suffering,

<sup>1</sup> This impulse has by no means died out from the Spanish temperament. Thus Ruiz Zorrilla, the celebrated Republican leader, who played a great part in the revolution of 1868 and the subsequent reign of Amadeo, in his later years at Paris virtually became a monk, experiencing the influence of the Dominicans, and being a fervent admirer of the memory of Lacordaire.

or a resolute determination to expiate their sins at all costs. That would have been far better accomplished in less exquisite spots. For many a weary and sensitive soul, we may be sure, it was not the thirst for suffering but the thirst for joy that led them to Our Lady of Monserrat. When they let the heavy burden of the world slide from off their shoulders—the cares of a household, the hardships of camps, the restraints of courts—and climbed to a new home in this mountain, it was not with a sinking, but with a rising heart, with the exhilaration of St. Francis, with the glad new sense of delicious freedom which once filled the men who went into the Thebaid. To lie in the sunshine, and teach the birds to feed from the hand, to know how delicate is the taste of the water one has oneself fetched from the spring, and the herbs one has gathered with care; to watch the superb and ever-changing procession of day and night, of summer and winter; to gaze on the towns and villages that lie along the banks of the Llobregat below and look so insignificant—here was an unfailing source of spiritual joy to men who knew how bitterly tasted the dregs of the cup of life.<sup>1</sup>

Such thoughts are natural at Monserrat as one wanders from holy place to holy place, or spends a day in a long solitary ramble among the ever-varied delights of the path that leads to the extreme summit of the mountain at San Jerónimo. It would be an error, however, to assume that even when the shrine of Our Lady of Monserrat was at the height of its glory, even when the mountain was the goal of innumerable pilgrims, the hermit's life was altogether without hardship. But here it is that the peculiar temperament of the Spaniard comes into play. A certain ardour and at the same time a certain hardness lie at the heart of that temperament. In love and in religion, in the life of the crowd or in solitude, whatever the excess of his fervour, he

<sup>1</sup> Peyron, who came here before Monserrat was devastated, wrote that 'each of the solitary hermitages, though from afar they seem to lack everything, has its chapel, its cell, a well hollowed out in the rock, and a little garden; the hermits are for the most part men of good family.'

retains the instincts of a spiritual athlete—that is to say, in the strict sense, of an ascetic. That is indeed the secret of the curious unity and simplicity of the Spanish soul—it ever has the ardent and unsparing simplicity of flame. Santa Teresa de Jesus and Don Juan Tenorio, unlike representatives of the Spanish soul in life and legend as they may seem, yet alike reveal this flamelike quality. It is equally visible in the lowliest and the greatest spirits. Even Lope de Vega, with all his passionate exuberance of literary production, and all his reckless dissoluteness of living, to the end of his long life never shook himself free from his inborn spiritual asceticism. He never ate meat on Fridays, we are told, though for his health's sake he had a dispensation to do so, and on that day also he always flagellated himself; even on the Friday before he died, it is recorded, the walls of his room and the discipline he had used to scourge himself were found stained with fresh blood. It is the preoccupation with passion, the predominance of the lover and the saint, which makes it so easy for the Spaniard to treat with a light and easy negligence the heavy burden of material comfort which hangs like a millstone round the necks of northern people.<sup>1</sup>

Thus it is that a large part of the charm of Monserrat lies in its freedom, in the exclusion of all demands which are not essentially necessary. The ascetic temperament of the Spaniard renders few things necessary, while his individualism makes it easy for him, in no unkindly spirit, to leave the stranger alone. I cannot remember that any one during the whole of my stay made any attempt to hamper my movements, to offer his services or his wares, or to demand any gratuity. There are guides, indeed, but they do not proffer their services, and there is a little bureau where post cards are sold, but it is nearly always closed. One reflected on all that

<sup>1</sup> On the literary side Coventry Patmore, in a review of Valera's *Pepita Jiménez* (*Religio Poetae*, p. 73), has well summed up what is quintessential in this aspect of the Spanish soul: 'Alike in Calderon and in this work of Juan Valera, we find that complete synthesis of gravity of matter and gaiety of manner which is the glittering crown of art, and which out of Spanish literature is to be found only in Shakespeare, and even in him in a far less obvious degree.'

would be seen here if some evil fate had placed Our Lady of Monserrat's shrine in one's own country—of the huge and gaudy hotels, with their liveried flunkeys, of the tea-garden which would replace the cross on the Mirador, of the innumerable shops and booths where the stranger would be pestered to buy altogether unnecessary articles, of the gigantic advertisements of whiskies and liver-pills which would defile every exquisite point of rock. As one thinks of these things one realizes how far we have yet to travel before we attain to the Spaniard's insight into the art of living, his fine parsimony in life, lest for life's sake he should lose the causes for living, his due subordination of dull material claims to the larger spiritual claims of joy and freedom.

That, indeed, is the final lesson of Monserrat, and the last thought as we leave this shrine in the sky where the Spaniard comes for a brief season to pray and to laugh and to make love. It is but a little thing to have seen the old wooden image of the Virgin, laden as it may be with the memories of a dozen centuries. But it is a great thing to have been lifted for a moment into a larger spiritual air, to have caught a glimpse of a finer ideal of life, to have learnt a lesson in the art of living. The symbolic quest of the Grail, after all, may still be pursued in Monserrat.

## THE ART OF DANCING

### I

DANCING and building are the two primary and essential arts. The art of dancing stands at the source of all the arts that express themselves first in the human person. The art of building, or architecture, is the beginning of all the arts that lie outside the person; and in the end they unite. Music, acting, poetry proceed in the one mighty stream; sculpture, painting, all the arts of design, in the other. There is no primary art outside these two arts, for their origin is far earlier than man himself; and dancing came first.<sup>1</sup>

That is one reason why dancing, however it may at times be scorned by passing fashions, has a profound and eternal attraction even for those one might suppose farthest from its influence. The joyous beat of the feet of children, the cosmic play of philosophers' thoughts, rise and fall according to the same laws of rhythm. If we are indifferent to the art of dancing we have failed to understand, not merely the supreme manifestation of physical life, but also the supreme symbol of spiritual life.

The significance of dancing, in the wide sense, thus lies in the fact that it is simply an intimate concrete appeal of a general rhythm, that general rhythm which marks not life only but the universe, if one may still be allowed so to name the sum of the cosmic influences that reach us. We need not, indeed, go so far as the planets or the stars and outline their ethereal dances. We have but to stand on the seashore and watch the waves that beat at our feet, to observe that at nearly regular intervals this seemingly monotonous rhythm is accentuated for several beats, so that the waves are

<sup>1</sup> It is even possible that, in earlier than human times, dancing and architecture may have been the result of the same impulse. The nest of birds is the chief early form of building, and Edmund Selous has suggested (*Zoologist*, Dec. 1901) that the nest may first have arisen as an accidental result of the ecstatic sexual dance of birds.

really dancing the measure of a tune. It need surprise us not at all that rhythm, ever tending to be moulded into a tune, should mark all the physical and spiritual manifestations of life. Dancing is the primitive expression alike of religion and of love—of religion from the earliest human times we know of and of love from a period long anterior to the coming of man. The art of dancing, moreover, is intimately entwined with all human tradition of war, of labour, of pleasure, of education, while some of the wisest philosophers and the most ancient civilizations have regarded the dance as the pattern in accordance with which the moral life of men must be woven. To realize, therefore, what dancing means for mankind—the poignancy and the many-sidedness of its appeal—we must survey the whole sweep of human life, both at its highest and at its deepest moments.

## II

‘What do you dance?’ When a man belonging to one branch of the great Bantu division of mankind met a member of another, said Livingstone, that was the question he asked. What a man danced, that was his tribe, his social customs, his religion, for, as an anthropologist has put it, ‘a savage does not preach his religion, he dances it.’ There are peoples in the world who have no secular dances, only religious dances, and some investigators believe with Gerland that every dance was of religious origin. That view may seem too extreme, even if we admit that some even of our modern dances, like the waltz, may have been originally religious. Even still (as Skene has shown among the Arabs and Swahili of Africa) so various are dances and their functions among some peoples that they cover the larger part of life. Yet we have to remember that for primitive man there is no such thing as religion apart from life, for religion covers everything. Dancing is a magical operation for the attainment of real and important ends of every kind. It was clearly of immense benefit to the individual and to society, by imparting

strength and adding organized harmony. It seemed reasonable to suppose that it attained other beneficial ends, that were incalculable, for calling down blessings or warding off misfortunes. We may conclude, with Wundt, that the dance was in the beginning the expression of the whole man, for the whole man was religious.<sup>1</sup>

Thus among primitive peoples, religion being so large a part of life, the dance inevitably becomes of supreme religious importance. To dance was at once both to worship and to pray. Just as we still find in our Prayer Books that there are divine services for all the great fundamental acts of life, for birth, for marriage, for death, as well as for the cosmic procession of the world as marked by ecclesiastical festivals, and for the great catastrophes of nature, such as droughts, so also it has ever been among primitive peoples. For all the solemn occasions of life, for bridals and for funerals, for seed-time and for harvest, for war and for peace, for all these things there were fitting dances. To-day we find religious people who in church pray for rain or for the restoration of their friends to health. Their forefathers also desired these things, but, instead of praying for them, they danced for them the fitting dance which tradition had handed down, and which the chief or the medicine-man solemnly conducted. The gods themselves danced, as the stars dance in the sky—so at least the Mexicans, and we may be sure many other peoples, have held—and to dance is therefore to imitate the gods, to work with them, perhaps to persuade them to work in the direction of our own desires. 'Work for us!' is the song-refrain, expressed or implied, of every religious dance. In the worship of solar deities in various countries it was customary to dance round the altar, as the stars dance round the sun. Even in Europe the popular belief that the sun dances on

<sup>1</sup> 'Not the epic song but the dance,' Wundt says (*Völkerpsychologic*, 3rd ed. 1911, Bd. I, Teil I, p. 277), 'accompanied by a monotonous and often meaningless song, constitutes everywhere the most primitive, and, in spite of that primitiveness, the most highly developed art. Whether as a ritual dance, or as a pure emotional expression of the joy in rhythmic bodily movement, it rules the life of primitive men to such a degree that all other forms of art are subordinate to it.'

Easter Sunday has perhaps scarcely yet died out. To dance is to take part in the cosmic control of the world. Every sacred dionysian dance is an imitation of the divine dance.

All religions, and not merely those of primitive character, have been at the outset, and sometimes throughout, in some measure saltatory. That was recognized even in the ancient world by acute observers, like Lucian, who remarks in his essay on dancing that 'You cannot find a single ancient Mystery in which there is no dancing; in fact most people say of the devotees of the Mysteries that "they dance them out."' This is so all over the world. It is not more pronounced in early Christianity, and among the ancient Hebrews who danced before the ark, than among the Australian aborigines whose great corroborees are religious dances conducted by the medicine-men with their sacred staves in their hands. Every American Indian tribe seems to have had its own religious dances, varied and elaborate, often with a richness of meaning which the patient study of modern investigators has but slowly revealed. The Shamans in the remote steppes of Northern Siberia have their ecstatic religious dances, and in modern Europe the Turkish dervishes—perhaps of related stock—still dance in their cloisters similar ecstatic dances, combined with song and prayer, as a regular part of devotional service.

These religious dances, it may be observed, are sometimes ecstatic, sometimes pantomimic. It is natural that this should be so. By each road it is possible to penetrate towards the divine mystery of the world. The auto-intoxication of rapturous movement brings the devotees, for a while at least, into that self-forgetful union with the not-self which the mystic ever seeks. The ecstatic Hindu dance in honour of the pre-Aryan hill-god, afterwards Siva, became in time a great symbol, 'the clearest image of the *activity* of God,' it has been called, 'which any art or religion can boast of.'<sup>1</sup> Panto-

<sup>1</sup> See an interesting essay in *The Dance of Siva: Fourteen Indian Essays*, by Ananda Coomaraswamy, New York, 1918.

mimic dances, on the other hand, with their effort to heighten natural expression and to imitate natural process, bring the dancers into the divine sphere of creation and enable them to assist vicariously in the energy of the gods. The dance thus becomes the presentation of a divine drama, the vital re-enactment of a sacred history, in which the worshipper is enabled to play a real part.<sup>1</sup> In this way ritual arises.

It is in this sphere—highly primitive as it is—of pantomimic dancing crystallized in ritual, rather than in the sphere of ecstatic dancing, that we may to-day in civilization witness the survivals of the dance in religion. The divine services of the American Indian, said Lewis Morgan, took the form of 'set dances, each with its own name, songs, steps, and costume.' At this point the early Christian, worshipping the Divine Body, was able to join in spiritual communion with the ancient Egyptian or the later Japanese,<sup>2</sup> or the modern American Indian. They are all alike privileged to enter, each in his own way, a sacred mystery, and to participate in the sacrifice of a heavenly Mass.

What by some is considered to be the earliest known Christian ritual—the 'Hymn of Jesus' assigned to the second century—is nothing but a sacred dance. Eusebius in the third century stated that Philo's description of the worship of the Therapeuts agreed at all points with Christian custom, and that meant the prominence of dancing, to which indeed Eusebius often refers in connection with Christian worship. It has been supposed by some that the Christian church was originally a theatre, the choir being the raised stage, even the word *choir*, it is argued, meaning an enclosed space for dancing. It is certain that at the Eucharist the faithful gesticulated with their hands, danced with their feet, flung their

<sup>1</sup> This view was clearly put forward long ago, by W. W. Newell at the International Congress of Anthropology at Chicago in 1893. It has become almost a commonplace since.

<sup>2</sup> See a charming paper by Marcella Azra Hincks, 'The Art of Dancing in Japan,' *Fortnightly Review*, July 1906. Pantomimic dancing, which has played a highly important part in Japan, was introduced into religion from China, it is said, in the earliest time, and was not adapted to secular purposes until the sixteenth century.

bodies about. Chrysostom, who referred to this behaviour round the Holy Table at Antioch, only objected to drunken excesses in connection with it; the custom itself be evidently regarded as traditional and right.

While the central function of Christian worship is a sacred drama, a divine pantomime, the associations of Christianity and dancing are by no means confined to the ritual of the Mass and its later more attenuated transformations. The very idea of dancing had a sacred and mystic meaning to the early Christians, who had meditated profoundly on the text: 'We have piped unto you and ye have not danced.' Origen prayed that above all things there may be made operative in us the mystery 'of the stars dancing in heaven for the salvation of the universe.' So that the monks of the Cistercian Order who in a later age worked for the world more especially by praying for it (*orare est laborare*) were engaged in the same task on earth as the stars in heaven; dancing and praying are the same thing. St. Basil, who was so enamoured of natural things, described the angels dancing in heaven, and later the author of the *Dieta Salutis* (said to have been St. Bonaventura), which is supposed to have influenced Dante in assigning so large a place to dancing in the *Paradiso*, described dancing as the occupation of the inmates of heaven, and Christ as the leader of the dance. Even in more modern times an ancient Cornish carol sang of the life of Jesus as a dance, and represented him as declaring that he died in order that man 'may come unto the general dance.'<sup>1</sup>

This attitude could not fail to be reflected in practice. Genuine dancing, not merely formalized and unrecognizable dancing, such as the traditionalized Mass, must have been frequently introduced into Christian worship in early times. Until a few centuries ago it remained not uncommon, and it even still persists in remote corners of the Christian world. In English cathedrals dancing went on until the fourteenth century. At Paris, Limoges, and elsewhere in France, the priests danced in

<sup>1</sup> I owe some of these facts to an interesting article by G. R. Mead, 'The Sacred Dance of Jesus,' *Quest*, Oct. 1910.

the choir at Easter up to the seventeenth century, in Roussillon up to the eighteenth century. Roussillon is a Catalan province with Spanish traditions, and it is in Spain, where dancing is a deeper and more passionate impulse than elsewhere in Europe, that religious dancing took firmest root and flourished longest. In the cathedrals of Seville, Toledo, Valencia, and Jerez there was formerly dancing, though it now only survives at a few special festivals in the first. At Alaró in Mallorca, also at the present day, a dancing company called *Els Cosiers*, on the festival of St. Roch, the patron saint of the place, dance in the church in fanciful costumes with tambourines, up to the steps of the high altar, immediately after Mass, and then dance out of the church.<sup>1</sup> In another part of the Christian world, in the Abyssinian Church—an offshoot of the Eastern Church—dancing is also said still to form part of worship.

Dancing, we may see throughout the world, has been so essential, so fundamental, a part of all vital and undegenerate religion, that whenever a new religion appears, a religion of the spirit and not merely an anaemic religion of the intellect, we should still have to ask of it the question of the Bantu: 'What do you dance?'

### III

Dancing is not only intimately associated with religion, it has an equally intimate association with love. Here indeed the relationship is even more primitive, for it is far older than man. Dancing, said Lucian, is as old as love. Among insects and among birds it may be said

<sup>1</sup> The dance of the *Seises* in Seville Cathedral is evidently of great antiquity, though it was so much a matter of course that we scarcely hear of it until 1690 when the Archbishop of the day, in opposition to the Chapter, wished to suppress it. A decree of the king was finally obtained permitting it, provided it was performed only by men, so that evidently, before that date, girls as well as boys took part in it; see Rev. John Morris, 'Dancing in Churches,' *The Month*, Dec. 1892; also a valuable article on the *Seises* by J. B. Trend, *Music and Letters*, Jan. 1921. A good description of the dance of *Els Cosiers* and of other Mallorcan ritual dances is given by Mrs. Wyman, *Dancing Times*, March 1920.

that dancing is often an essential part of love. In courtship the male dances, sometimes in rivalry with other males, in order to charm the female; then, after a short or long interval, the female is aroused to share his ardour and join in the dance; the final climax of the dance is the union of the lovers. Among the mammals most nearly related to man, indeed, dancing is but little developed; their energies are more variously diffused, though a close observer of the apes, Dr. Louis Robinson, has pointed out that the 'spasmodic jerking of the chimpanzee's feeble legs,' pounding the partition of his cage, is the crude motion out of which 'the heavenly alchemy of evolution has created the divine movements of Pavlova'; but it must be remembered that the anthropoid apes are offshoots only from the stock that produced Man, his cousins and not his ancestors. It is the more primitive love-dance of insects and birds that seems to reappear among human savages in various parts of the world, notably in Africa, and in a conventionalized and symbolized form it is still danced in civilization to-day. Indeed, it is in this aspect that dancing has so often aroused reprobation, from the days of early Christianity until the present, among those for whom the dance has merely been, in the words of a seventeenth-century writer, a series of 'immodest and dissolute movements by which the cupidity of the flesh is aroused.'

But in Nature and among primitive peoples it has its value precisely on this account. It is a process of courtship, and even more than that, it is a novitiate for love, and a novitiate which was found to be an admirable training for love. Among some peoples, indeed, as the Omahas, the same word meant both to dance and to love. By his beauty, his energy, his skill, the male must win the female, so impressing the image of himself on her imagination that finally her desire is aroused to overcome her reticence. That is the task of the male throughout nature, and in innumerable species besides Man it has been found that the school in which the task may best be learnt is the dancing school. Those who have not the skill and the strength to learn

are left behind, and as they are probably the least capable members of the race, it may be in this way that a kind of sexual selection has been embodied in unconscious eugenics, and aided the higher development of the race. The moths and the butterflies, the African ostrich and the Sumatran Argus pheasant, with their fellows innumerable, have been the precursors of man in the strenuous school of erotic dancing, fitting themselves for selection by the females of their choice as the most splendid progenitors of the future race.<sup>1</sup>

From this point of view, it is clear, the dance performed a double function. On the one hand, the tendency to dance, arising under the obscure stress of this impulse, brought out the best possibilities the individual held the promise of; on the other hand, at the moment of courtship, the display of the activities thus acquired developed on the sensory side all the latent possibilities of beauty which at last became conscious in man. That this came about we cannot easily escape concluding. How it came about, how it happens that some of the least intelligent of creatures thus developed a beauty and a grace that are enchanting even to our human eyes, is a miracle, even if not effected by the mystery of sex, which we cannot yet comprehend.

When we survey the human world, the erotic dance of the animal world is seen not to have lost but rather to have gained influence. It is no longer the males alone who are thus competing for the love of the females. It comes about by a modification in the earlier method of selection that often not only the men dance for the women, but the women for the men, each striving in a storm of rivalry to arouse and attract the desire of the other. In innumerable parts of the world the season of love is a time which the nubile of each sex devote to dancing in each other's presence, sometimes one sex, sometimes the other, sometimes both, in the frantic

<sup>1</sup> See, for references, Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, vol. iii, 'Analysis of the Sexual Impulse,' pp. 29, etc., and Westermarck, *History of Human Marriage*, vol. i, chap. xiii, p. 470.

effort to display all the force and energy, the skill and endurance, the beauty and grace, which at this moment are yearning within them to be poured into the stream of the race's life.

From this point of view we may better understand the immense ardour with which every part of the wonderful human body has been brought into the play of the dance. The men and women of races spread all over the world have shown a marvellous skill and patience in imparting rhythm and measure to the most unlikely, the most rebellious regions of the body, all wrought by desire into potent and dazzling images. To the vigorous races of northern Europe in their cold damp climate, dancing comes naturally to be dancing of the legs, so naturally that the English poet, as a matter of course, assumes that the dance of Salome was a 'twinkling of the feet.'<sup>1</sup> But on the opposite side of the world, in Japan and notably in Java and Madagascar, dancing may be exclusively dancing of the arms and hands, in some of the South Sea Islands of the hands and fingers alone. Dancing may even be carried on in the sitting posture, as occurs at Fiji in a dance connected with the preparation of the sacred drink, ava. In some districts of southern Tunisia dancing, again, is dancing of the hair, and all night long, till they perhaps fall exhausted, the marriageable girls will move their heads to the rhythm of a song, maintaining their hair in perpetual balance and sway. Elsewhere, notably in Africa, but also sometimes in Polynesia, as well as in the dances that had established themselves in ancient Rome, dancing is dancing of the body, with vibratory or rotatory movements of breasts or flanks. The complete dance along these lines, is, however, that in which the play of all the chief muscle-groups of the body is harmoniously interwoven. When

<sup>1</sup> At an earlier period, however, the dance of Salome was understood much more freely and often more accurately. As Enlart has pointed out, on a capital in the twelfth-century cloister of Moissac Salome holds a kind of castanets in her raised hands as she dances; on one of the western portals of Rouen Cathedral, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, she is dancing on her hands; while at Hemelver-deghem she is really executing the *morisco*, the 'danse du ventre.'

both sexes take part in such an exercise, developed into an idealized yet passionate pantomime of love, we have the complete erotic dance. In the beautiful ancient civilization of the Pacific it is probable that this ideal was sometimes reached, and at Tahiti in 1772 an old voyager crudely and summarily described the native dance as 'an endless variety of posturings and wagglings of the body, hands, feet, eyes, lips and tongue, in which they keep splendid time to the measure.' In Spain the dance of this kind has sometimes attained its noblest and most harmoniously beautiful expression. From the narratives of travellers, it would appear that it was especially in the eighteenth century that among all classes in Spain dancing of this kind was popular. The Church tacitly encouraged it, an Aragonese canon told Baretta in 1770, in spite of its occasional indecorum, as a useful safety-valve for the emotions. It was not less seductive to the foreign spectator than to the people themselves. The grave traveller Peyron, towards the end of the century, growing eloquent over the languorous and flexible movements of the dance, the bewitching attitude, the voluptuous curves of the arms, declares that when one sees a beautiful Spanish woman dance one is inclined to fling all philosophy to the winds. And even that highly respectable Anglican clergyman, the Reverend Joseph Townsend, was constrained to state that he could 'almost persuade myself' that if the fandango were suddenly played in church the gravest worshippers would start up to join in that 'lascivious pantomime.' There we have the rock against which the primitive dance of sexual selection suffers shipwreck as civilization advances. And that prejudice of civilization becomes so ingrained that it is brought to bear even on the primitive dance. The pygmies of Africa are described by Sir H. H. Johnston as a very decorous and highly moral people, but their dances, he adds, are not so. Yet these dances, though to the eyes of Johnston, blinded by European civilization, 'grossly indecent,' he honestly, and inconsistently, adds are 'danced reverently.'

## IV

From the vital function of dancing in love, and its sacred function in religion, to dancing as an art, a profession, an amusement, may seem, at the first glance, a sudden leap. In reality the transition is gradual, and it began to be made at a very early period in diverse parts of the globe. All the matters that enter into courtship tend to fall under the sway of art; their aesthetic pleasure is a secondary reflection of their primary vital joy. Dancing could not fail to be first in manifesting this tendency. But even religious dancing swiftly exhibited the same transformation; dancing, like priesthood, became a profession, and dancers, like priests, formed a caste. This, for instance, took place in old Hawaii. The hula dance was a religious dance; it required a special education and an arduous training; moreover, it involved the observance of important taboos and the exercise of sacred rites; by the very fact of its high specialization it came to be carried out by paid performers, a professional caste. In India, again, the Devadasis, or sacred dancing girls, are at once both religious and professional dancers. They are married to gods, they are taught dancing by the Brahmins, they figure in religious ceremonies, and their dances represent the life of the god they are married to as well as the emotions of love they experience for him. Yet, at the same time, they also give professional performances in the houses of rich private persons who pay for them. It thus comes about that to the foreigner the Devadasis scarcely seem very unlike the Ramedjenis, the dancers of the street, who are of very different origin, and mimic in their performances the play of merely human passions. The Portuguese conquerors of India called both kinds of dancers indiscriminately *bailadeira* (or dancers), which we have corrupted into Bayadères.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For an excellent account of dancing in India, now being degraded by modern civilization, see Rothfeld, *Women of India*, chap. vii, 'The Dancing Girl,' 1922.

In our modern world professional dancing as an art has become altogether divorced from religion, and even, in any biological sense, from love; it is scarcely even possible, so far as western civilization is concerned, to trace back the tradition to either source. If we survey the development of dancing as an art in Europe, it seems to me that we have to recognize two streams of tradition which have sometimes merged but yet remain in their ideals and their tendencies essentially distinct. I would call these traditions the Classical, which is much the more ancient and fundamental, and may be said to be of Egyptian origin, and the Romantic, which is of Italian origin, chiefly known to us as the ballet. The first is, in its pure form, solo dancing—though it may be danced in couples and many together—and is based on the rhythmic beauty and expressiveness of the simple human personality when its energy is concentrated in measured yet passionate movement. The second is concerted dancing, mimetic and picturesque, wherein the individual is subordinated to the wider and variegated rhythm of the group. It may be easy to devise another classification and nomenclature, but this is simple and instructive enough for our purpose.

There can scarcely be a doubt that Egypt has been for many thousands of years, as indeed it still remains, a great dancing centre, the most influential dancing school the world has ever seen, radiating its influence to south and east and north. We may perhaps even agree with the historian of the dance who terms it 'the mother-country of all civilized dancing.' We are not entirely dependent on the ancient wall-pictures of Egypt for our knowledge of Egyptian skill in the art. Sacred mysteries, it is known, were danced in the temples, and queens and princesses took part in the orchestras that accompanied them. It is significant that the musical instruments still peculiarly associated with the dance were originated or developed in Egypt: the guitar is an Egyptian instrument, and its name was a hieroglyph already used when the pyramids were being built; the cymbal, the tambourine, triangles, castanets, in one

form or another, were all familiar to the ancient Egyptians, and with the Egyptian art of dancing they must have spread all round the shores of the Mediterranean, the great focus of our civilization, at a very early date.<sup>1</sup> Even beyond the Mediterranean, at Cadiz, dancing that was essentially Egyptian in character was established, and Cadiz became the dancing school of Spain. The Nile and Cadiz were thus the two great centres of ancient dancing, and Martial mentions them both together, for each supplied its dancers to Rome. This dancing, alike whether Egyptian or Gaditanian, was the expression of the individual dancer's body and art; the garments played but a small part in it, they were frequently transparent, and sometimes discarded altogether. It was, and it remains, simple, personal, passionate dancing, classic, therefore, in the same sense as, on the side of literature, the poetry of Catullus is classic.<sup>2</sup>

Ancient Greek dancing was essentially classic dancing, as here understood. On the Greek vases, as reproduced in Emmanuel's attractive book on Greek dancing and elsewhere, we find the same play of the arms, the same sideward turn, the same extreme backward extension of the body, which had long before been represented in Egyptian monuments. Many supposedly modern move-

<sup>1</sup> I may hazard the suggestion that the gipsies possibly acquired their rather unaccountable name of Egyptians, not so much because they had passed through Egypt, the reason which is generally suggested—for they must have passed through many countries—but because of their proficiency in dances of the recognized Egyptian type.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to observe that Egypt still retains, almost unchanged through fifty centuries, its traditions, technique, and skill in dancing, while, as in ancient Egyptian dancing, the garment forms an almost or quite negligible element in the art. Loret remarks that a charming Egyptian dancer of the Eighteenth Dynasty, whose picture in her transparent gauze he reproduces, is an exact portrait of a charming *Almeh* of to-day whom he has seen dancing in Thebes with the same figure, the same dressing of the hair, the same jewels. I hear from a physician, a gynaecologist now practising in Egypt, that a dancing girl can lie on her back, and with a full glass of water standing on one side of her abdomen and an empty glass on the other, can by the contraction of the muscles on the side supporting the full glass, project the water from it, so as to fill the empty glass. This, of course, is not strictly dancing, but it is part of the technique which underlies classic dancing and it witnesses to the thoroughness with which the technical side of Egyptian dancing is still cultivated.

ments in dancing were certainly already common both to Egyptian and Greek dancing, as well as the clapping of hands to keep time which is still an accompaniment of Spanish dancing. It seems clear, however, that, on this general classic and Mediterranean basis, Greek dancing had a development so refined and so special—though in technical elaboration of steps, it seems likely, inferior to modern dancing—that it exercised no influence outside Greece. Dancing became, indeed, the most characteristic and the most generally cultivated of Greek arts. Pindar, in a splendid Oxyrhynchine fragment, described Hellas, in what seemed to him supreme praise, as 'the land of lovely dancing,' and Athenaeus pointed out that he calls Apollo 'the Dancer.' It may well be that the Greek drama arose out of dance and song, and that the dance throughout was an essential and plastic element in it. Even if we reject the statement of Aristotle that tragedy originated in the Dionysian dithyramb, the alternative suppositions (such as Ridgeway's theory of dancing round the tombs of the dead) equally involve the same elements. It has often been pointed out that poetry in Greece demanded a practical knowledge of all that could be included under 'dancing.' Aeschylus is said to have developed the technique of dancing, and Sophocles danced in his own dramas. In these developments, no doubt, Greek dancing tended to overpass the fundamental limits of classic dancing and foreshadowed the ballet.<sup>1</sup>

The real germ of the ballet, however, is to be found in Rome, where the pantomime with its concerted and picturesque method of expressive action was developed, and Italy is the home of Romantic dancing. The same impulse which produced the pantomime, produced more than a thousand years later in the same Italian region the modern ballet. In both cases, one is inclined to think, we may trace the influence of the same Etruscan

<sup>1</sup> 'We must learn to regard the form of the Greek drama as a dance form,' says G. Warre Cornish in an interesting article on 'Greek Drama and the Dance' (*Fortnightly Review*, Feb. 1913), 'a musical symphonic dance-vision, through which the history of Greece and the soul of man are portrayed.'

and Tuscan race which so long has had its seat there, a race with a genius for expressive, dramatic, picturesque art. We see it on the walls of Etruscan tombs and again in pictures of Botticelli and his fellow Tuscans. The modern ballet, it is generally believed, had its origin in the spectacular pageants at the marriage of Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan, in 1489. The fashion for such performances spread to the other Italian courts, including Florence, and Catharine de Medici, when she became Queen of France, brought the Italian ballet to Paris. Here it speedily became fashionable. Kings and queens were its admirers and even took part in it; great statesmen were its patrons. Before long, and especially in the great age of Louis XIV, it became an established institution, still an adjunct of opera but with a vital life and growth of its own, maintained by distinguished musicians, artists, and dancers. Romantic dancing, to a much greater extent than what I have called classic dancing, which depends so largely on simple personal qualities, tends to be vitalized by transplantation and the absorption of new influences, provided that the essential basis of technique and tradition is preserved in the new development. Lulli, in the seventeenth century, brought women into the ballet; Camargo discarded the complicated costumes and shortened the skirt, so rendering possible not only her own lively and vigorous method but all the freedom and airy grace of later dancing. It was Noverre who by his ideas, worked out at Stuttgart and soon brought to Paris by Gaetan Vestris, made the ballet a new and complete art form; this Swiss-French genius not only elaborated plot revealed by gesture and dance alone, but just as another and greater Swiss-French genius, about the same time, brought sentiment and emotion into the novel, he brought it into the ballet. In the French ballet of the eighteenth century a very high degree of perfection seems thus to have been reached, while in Italy where the ballet had originated it decayed, and Milan which had been its source became the nursery of a tradition of devitalized technique carried to the finest point of delicate perfection. The influence

of the French school was maintained as a living force into the nineteenth century—when it was renovated afresh by the new spirit of the age and Taglioni became the most ethereal embodiment of the spirit of the Romantic movement in a form that was genuinely classic—overspreading the world by the genius of a few individual dancers. When they had gone the ballet slowly and steadily declined. As it declined as an art, so also it declined in credit and in popularity; it became scarcely respectable even to admire dancing. Thirty or forty years ago, those of us who still appreciated dancing as an art—and how few they were!—had to seek for it painfully and sometimes in strange surroundings. A recent historian of dancing, in a book published so lately as 1906, declared that 'the ballet is now a thing of the past, and, with the modern change of ideas, a thing that is never likely to be resuscitated.' That historian never mentioned Russian dancing, yet his book was scarcely published before the Russian ballet arrived to scatter ridicule over his rash prophecy by raising the ballet to a pitch of perfection it can rarely have surpassed, as an expressive, emotional, even passionate form of living art.

The Russian ballet was an offshoot from the French ballet and illustrates once more the vivifying effect of transplantation on the art of Romantic dancing. The Empress Anna introduced it in 1735 and appointed a French ballet master and a Neapolitan composer to carry it on; it reached a high degree of technical perfection during the following hundred years, on the traditional lines, and the principal dancers were all imported from Italy. It was not until recent years that this firm discipline and these ancient traditions were vitalized into an art-form of exquisite and vivid beauty by the influence of the soil in which they had slowly taken root. This contact, when at last it was effected, mainly by the genius of Fokine and the enterprise of Diaghilev, involved a kind of revolution, for its outcome, while genuine ballet, has yet all the effect of delicious novelty. The tradition by itself was in Russia an exotic without

real life, and had nothing to give to the world; on the other hand a Russian ballet apart from that tradition, if we can conceive such a thing, would have been formless, extravagant, bizarre, not subdued to any fine aesthetic ends. What we see here, in the Russian ballet as we know it to-day, is a splendid and arduous technical tradition brought at last — by the combined skill of designers, composers, and dancers — into real fusion with an environment from which during more than a century it had been held apart: Russian genius for music, Russian feeling for rhythm, Russian skill in the use of bright colour, and not least, the Russian orgiastic temperament, the Russian spirit of tender poetic melancholy, and the general Slav passion for folk-dancing, shown in other branches of the race also, Polish, Bohemian, Bulgarian, and Serbian. At almost the same time, what I have termed Classic dancing was independently revived in America by Isadora Duncan, bringing back what seemed to be the free naturalism of the Greek dance, and Ruth St. Denis, seeking to discover and revitalize the secrets of the old Indian and Egyptian traditions. Whenever now we find any restored art of theatrical dancing, as in the Swedish ballet, it has been inspired, more or less, by an eclectic blending of these two revived forms, the Romantic from Russia, the Classic from America. The result has been that our age sees one of the most splendid movements in the whole history of the ballet.

## V

Dancing as an art, we may be sure, cannot die out but will always be undergoing a rebirth. Not merely as an art but also as a social custom it perpetually emerges afresh from the soul of the people. Less than a century ago the polka thus arose, extemporized by the Bohemian servant girl, Anna Slezakova, out of her own head for the joy of her own heart, and only rendered a permanent form, apt for world-wide popularity, by the accident that it was observed and noted down by an

artist. Dancing has for ever been in existence as a spontaneous custom, a social discipline. Thus it is, finally, that dancing meets us, not only as love, as religion, as art, but also as morals.

All human work, under natural conditions, is a kind of dance. In a large and learned work, supported by an immense amount of evidence, Karl Bücher has argued that work differs from the dance not in kind but only in degree, since they are both essentially rhythmic. There is a good reason why work should be rhythmic, for all great combined efforts, the efforts by which alone great constructions such as those of megalithic days could be carried out, must be harmonized. It has even been argued that this necessity is the source of human speech, and we have the so-called Yo-heave-ho theory of language. In the memory of those who have ever lived on a sailing ship—that loveliest of human creations now disappearing from the world—there will always linger the echo of the chanties which sailors sang as they hoisted the topsail yard or wound the capstan or worked the pumps. That is the type of primitive combined work, and it is indeed difficult to see how such work can be effectively accomplished without such a device for regulating the rhythmic energy of the muscles. The dance rhythm of work has thus acted socializing in a parallel line with the dance rhythms of the arts, and indeed in part as their inspirer. The Greeks, it has been too fancifully suggested, by insight or by intuition understood this when they fabled that Orpheus, whom they regarded as the earliest poet, was specially concerned with moving stones and trees. Bücher has pointed out that even poetic metre may be conceived as arising out of work; metre is the rhythmic stamping of the feet, as in the technique of verse it is still metaphorically called; iambics and trochees, spondees and anapaests and dactyls, may still be heard among blacksmiths smiting the anvil or navvies wielding their hammers in the streets. In so far as they arose out of work, music and singing and dancing are naturally a single art. A poet must always write to a tune, said

Swinburne. Herein the ancient ballad of Europe is a significant type. It is, as the name indicates, a dance as much as a song, performed by a singer who sang the story and a chorus who danced and shouted the apparently meaningless refrain; it is absolutely the chanty of the sailors and is equally apt for the purposes of concerted work.<sup>1</sup> Yet our most complicated musical forms are evolved from similar dances. The symphony is but a development of a dance suite, in the first place folk-dances, such as Bach and Handel composed. Indeed a dance still lingers always at the heart of music and even the heart of the composer. Mozart, who was himself an accomplished dancer, used often to say, so his wife stated, that it was dancing, not music, that he really cared for. Wagner believed that Beethoven's seventh symphony—to some of us the most fascinating of them and the most purely musical—was an apotheosis of the dance, and even if that belief throws no light on the intention of Beethoven it is at least a revelation of Wagner's own feeling for the dance.

It is, however, the dance itself, apart from work and apart from the other arts, which, in the opinion of many to-day, has had a decisive influence in socializing, that is to say in moralizing, the human species. Work showed the necessity of harmonious rhythmic co-operation, but the dance developed that rhythmic co-operation and imparted a beneficent impetus to all human activities. It was Grosse, in his *Beginnings of Art*, who first clearly set forth the high social significance of the dance in the creation of human civilization. The participants in a dance, as all observers of savages have noted, exhibit a wonderful unison; they are, as it were, fused into a single being stirred by a single impulse. Social unification is thus accomplished. Apart from war, this is the chief factor making for social solidarity in primitive life; it was indeed the best training for war. It has

<sup>1</sup> It should perhaps be remarked that in recent times it has been denied that the old ballads were built up on dance songs. Miss Pound, for instance, in a book on the subject, argues that they were of aristocratic and not communal origin, which may well be, though the absence of the dance element does not seem to follow.

been a twofold influence; on the one hand it aided unity of action and method in evolution: on the other it had the invaluable function—for man is naturally a timid animal—of imparting courage; the universal drum, as Louis Robinson remarks, has been an immense influence in human affairs. Even among the Romans, with their highly developed military system, dancing and war were definitely allied; the Salii constituted a college of sacred military dancers; the dancing season was March, the war-god's month and the beginning of the war season, and all through that month there were dances in triple measure before the temples and round the altars, with songs so ancient that not even the priests could understand them. We may trace a similar influence of dancing in all the co-operative arts of life. All our most advanced civilization, Grosse insisted, is based on dancing. It is the dance that socialized man.

Thus, in the large sense, dancing has possessed peculiar value as a method of national education. As civilization grew self-conscious this was realized. 'One may judge of a king,' according to an ancient Chinese maxim, 'by the state of dancing during his reign.' So also among the Greeks; it has been said that dancing and music lay at the foundation of the whole political and military as well as religious organization of the Dorian states.

In the narrow sense, in individual education, the great importance of dancing came to be realized even at an early stage of human development, and still more in the ancient civilizations. 'A good education,' Plato declared in the *Laws*, the final work of his old age, 'consists in knowing how to sing and dance well.' And in our own day one of the keenest and most enlightened of educationists has lamented the decay of dancing; the revival of dancing, Stanley Hall declares, is imperatively needed to give poise to the nerves, schooling to the emotions, strength to the will, and to harmonize the feelings and the intellect with the body which supports them.

It can scarcely be said that these functions of dancing

are yet generally realized and embodied afresh in education. For if it is true that dancing engendered morality, it is also true that in the end, by the irony of fate, morality, grown insolent, sought to crush its own parent, and for a time succeeded only too well. Four centuries ago dancing was attacked by that spirit, in England called Puritanism, which was then spread over the greater part of Europe, just as active in Bohemia as in England, and which has indeed been described as a general onset of developing Urbanism against the old Ruralism. It made no distinction between good and bad, nor paused to consider what would come when dancing went. So it was that, as Remy de Gourmont remarks, the drinking-shop conquered the dance, and alcohol replaced the violin.

But when we look at the function of dancing in life from a higher and wider standpoint this episode in its history ceases to occupy so large a place. The conquest over dancing has never proved in the end a matter for rejoicing, even to morality, while an art which has been so intimately mixed with all the finest and deepest springs of life has always asserted itself afresh. For dancing is the loftiest, the most moving, the most beautiful of the arts because it is no mere translation or abstraction from life; it is life itself. It is the only art, as Rahel Varnhagen said, of which we ourselves are the stuff. Even if we are not ourselves dancers but merely the spectators of the dance we are still—according to that Lippssian doctrine of *Einfühlung* or 'empathy' by Groos termed 'the play of inner imitation,' which here at all events we may accept as true—feeling ourselves in the dancer who is manifesting and expressing the latent impulse of our own being.

It thus comes about that, beyond its manifold practical significance, dancing has always been felt to possess also a symbolic significance. Marcus Aurelius was accustomed to regard the art of life as like the dancer's art, though that imperial Stoic could not resist adding that in some respects it was more like the wrestler's art. 'I doubt not yet to make a figure in the great

Dance of Life that shall amuse the spectators in the sky,' said, long after, Blake, in the same strenuous spirit. In a later time Nietzsche, from first to last, showed himself possessed by the conception of the art of life as a dance, in which the dancer achieves the rhythmic freedom and harmony of his soul beneath the shadow of a hundred Damoclean swords. He said the same thing of his style, for to him the style and the man were one. 'My style,' he wrote to his intimate friend Rohde, 'is a dance.' 'Every day I count wasted,' he said again, 'in which there has been no dancing.' The dance lies at the beginning of art, and we find it also at the end. The first creators of civilization were making the dance, and the philosopher of a later age, hovering over the dark abyss of insanity, with bleeding feet and muscles strained to the breaking point, still seems to himself to be weaving the maze of the dance.

Please don't read this  
book because it is bad  
it is uninteresting and  
makes a man foolish

## THE ART OF RELIGION

### I

RELIGION is a large word, of good import and of evil import, and with the general discussion of religion we are not in this place concerned. Its quintessential core—which is the art of finding our emotional relationship to the world conceived as a whole—is all that here matters, and it is best termed ‘Mysticism.’ No doubt it needs some courage to use that word. It is the common label of abuse applied to every pseudo-spiritual thing that is held up for contempt. Yet it would be foolish to allow ourselves to be deflected from the right use of a word by the accident of its abuse. ‘Mysticism,’ however often misused, will here be used, because it is the correct term for the relationship of the Self to the Not-Self, of the individual to a whole, when, going beyond his own personal ends, he discovers his adjustment to larger ends, in harmony or devotion or love.

It has become a commonplace among the unthinking, or those who think badly, to assume an opposition of hostility between mysticism and science.<sup>1</sup> If ‘science’ is, as we have some reason to believe, an art, if ‘mysticism’ also is an art, the opposition can scarcely be radical, since they must both spring from the same root in natural human activity.

### II

If indeed by ‘science’ we mean the organization of an intellectual relationship to the world we live in adequate to give us some degree of power over that world,

<sup>1</sup> It is scarcely necessary to remark that if we choose to give to ‘mysticism’ a definition incompatible with ‘science,’ the opposition cannot be removed. This is, for example, done by Croce, who yet recognizes as highly important and has himself experienced (see the interesting autobiographical sketch only published in French, *Revue de Métaphysique*, Jan. 1918) a process of ‘conversion’ which is nothing else but mysticism as here understood. Only he has left himself no name to apply to it.

and if by 'mysticism' we mean the joyful organization of an emotional relationship to the world conceived as a whole,<sup>1</sup> the opposition which we usually assume to exist between them is of comparatively modern origin.

Among savage peoples such an opposition can scarcely be said to have any existence. The very fact that science, in the strict sense, seems often to begin with the stars might itself have suggested that the basis of science is mystical contemplation. Not only is there usually no opposition between the 'scientific' and the 'mystical' attitude among peoples we may fairly call primitive, but the two attitudes may be combined in the same person. The 'medicine-man' is not more an embryonic man of science than he is an embryonic mystic: he is both equally. He cultivates not only magic but holiness, he achieves the conquest of his own soul, he enters into harmony with the universe; and in doing this, and partly indeed through doing this, his knowledge is increased, his sensations and power of observation are rendered acute, and he is enabled so to gain organized knowledge of natural processes that he can to some extent foresee or even control those processes. He is the ancestor alike of the hermit following after sanctity and of the inventor, crystallizing discoveries into profitable patents. Such is the medicine-man wherever we may find him in his typical shape—which he cannot always adequately achieve—all over the world, around Torres Strait just as much as around Behring's Strait. Yet we have failed to grasp the significance of this fact.

It is the business of the *shaman*, as on the mystical side we may conveniently term the medicine-man,<sup>2</sup> to

<sup>1</sup> 'The endeavour of the human mind to enjoy the blessedness of actual communion with the highest,' which is Pringle Pattison's widely accepted definition of mysticism, I prefer not to use because it is ambiguous. The 'endeavour,' while it indicates that we are concerned with an art, also suggests its strained pathological forms, while 'actual communion' lends itself to ontological interpretations. 'In the flash of a quivering glance my mind reached to that which is,' St. Augustine's statement in his *Confessions*, Dom Cuthbert Butler regards as the mystic's claim in simplest form; but it similarly lends itself to the metaphysician eager to pounce on the 'Absolute.'

<sup>2</sup> A. van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 153.

place himself under the conditions—and even in primitive life those conditions are varied and subtle—which bring his will into harmony with the essence of the world, so that he grows one with that essence, that its will becomes his will, and, reversely, that, in a sense, his will becomes its. Herewith, in this unity with the spirit of the world, the possibility of magic and the power to control the operation of Nature are introduced into human thought, with its core of reality and its endless trail of absurdity, persisting even into advanced civilization.

But this harmony with the essence of the universe, this control of Nature through oneness with Nature, is not only at the heart of religion; it is also at the heart of science. It is only by the possession of an acquired or inborn temperament attuned to the temperament of Nature that a Faraday and an Edison, that any scientific discoverer or inventor, can achieve his results. And the primitive medicine-man, who on the religious side has attained harmony of the Self with the Not-self, and by obeying learnt to command, cannot fail on the scientific side also, under the special conditions of his isolated life, to acquire an insight into natural methods, a practical power over human activities and over the treatment of disease, such as on the imaginative and emotional side he already possesses. If we are able to see this essential and double attitude of the *shaman* or medicine-man, if we are able to eliminate all the extraneous absurdities and the extravagances which conceal the real nature of his function in the primitive world, the problem of science and mysticism, and their relationship to each other, ceases to have difficulties for us.

It is as well to point out, before passing on, that the investigators of primitive thought are not altogether in agreement with one another on this question of the relation of science to magic, and have complicated the question by drawing a distinction between magic (understood as Man's claim to control Nature) and religion (understood as Man's submission to Nature). The

difficulties seem due to an attempt to introduce clear-cut definitions at a stage of thought where none such existed. That medicine-men and priests cultivated science, while wrapping it up in occult and magical forms, seems indicated by the earliest historical traditions of the Near East. Herbert Spencer long ago brought together much of the evidence on this point. McDougall to-day in his *Social Psychology* (Chapter XIII) accepts magic as the origin of science, and Frazer in the early edition of his *Golden Bough* regarded magic as 'the savage equivalent of our natural science.' Marett<sup>1</sup> 'profoundly doubts' this, and declares that, if we can use the word 'science' at all in such a context, magic is occult science and the very antithesis of natural science. While all that Marett states is admirably true on the basis of his own definitions, he scarcely seems to realize the virtue of the word 'equivalent,' while at the same time, it may be, his definition of magic is too narrow. Silberer, from the psycho-analytic standpoint, accepting the development of exact science from one branch of magic, points out that science is on the one hand the recognition of concealed natural laws and, on the other, the dynamization of psychic power, and thus falls into two great classes, according as its operation is external or internal.<sup>2</sup> This seems a distinction which Marett has overlooked. In the latest edition of his work<sup>3</sup> Frazer has not insisted on the relation or analogy of science to magic, but has been content to point out that Man has passed through the three stages of magic, religion, and science. 'In magic Man depends on his own strength to meet the difficulties and dangers that beset him on every side. He believes in a certain established order of Nature on which he can surely count, and which he can manipulate for his own ends.' Then he finds he has overestimated his own powers and he humbly takes the road of religion, leaving the universe to the more or less capricious will of a higher

<sup>1</sup> *The Threshold of Religion*, 1914, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse*, 1911, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> *Golden Bough*, 'Balder the Beautiful,' vol. ii, pp. 304-5.

power. But he finds this view inadequate and he proceeds to revert in a measure to the older standpoint of magic by postulating explicitly what in magic had only been implicitly assumed, 'to wit, an inflexible regularity in the order of natural events which, if carefully observed, enables us to foresee their course with certainty, and to act accordingly.' So that science, in Frazer's view, is not so much directly derived from magic as itself in its original shape one with magic, and Man has proceeded not in a straight line but in a spiral.<sup>1</sup>

The profound significance of this early personage is, however, surely clear. If science and mysticism are alike based on fundamental natural instincts, appearing spontaneously all over the world; if, moreover, they naturally tend to be embodied in the same individual, in such a way that each impulse would seem to be dependent on the other for its full development; then there can be no ground for accepting any disharmony between them. The course of human evolution involves a division of labour, a specialization of science and of mysticism along special lines and in separate individuals.<sup>2</sup> But a fundamental antagonism of the two, it becomes evident, is not to be thought of; it is unthinkable, even absurd. If at some period in the course of civilization we seriously find that our science and our religion are antagonistic, then there must be something wrong either with our science or with our religion. Perhaps not seldom there may be something wrong with both. For if the natural impulses which normally work best together are separated and specialized in different persons we may expect to find a concomitant state of atrophy and hypertrophy, both alike morbid. The

<sup>1</sup> There was, however, no need for Frazer to withdraw from his earlier position; the common origins of magic and science has now been elaborately shown by Lynn Thorndike in his *History of Magic and Experimental Science* (1923).

<sup>2</sup> Farnell even asserts (in his *Greek Hero Cults*) that 'it is impossible to quote a single example of any one of the higher world religions working in harmony with the development of physical science.' He finds a 'special and unique' exception in the cult of Asclepios at Cos and Epidavros and Pergamon, where, after the fourth century B.C., there were physicians, practising a rational medical science, who were also official priests of the Asclepios temples.

scientific persons will become atrophied on the mystical side, the mystical person will become atrophied on the scientific side. Each will become morbidly hypertrophied on his own side. But the assumption that because there is a lack of harmony between opposing pathological states there must also be a similar lack of harmony in the normal state is unreasonable. We must severely put out of court alike the hypertrophied scientific people with atrophied religious instincts, and the hypertrophied religious people with atrophied scientific instincts. Neither group can help us here; they only introduce confusion. We have to examine the matter critically, to go back to the beginning, to take so wide a survey of the phenomena that their seemingly conflicting elements fall into harmony.

The fact, in the first place, that the person with an over-developed religious sense combined with an under-developed scientific sense necessarily conflicts with a person in whom the reverse state of affairs exists cannot be doubted, nor is the reason of it obscure. It is difficult to conceive a Darwin and a St. Theresa entering with full and genuine sympathy into each other's point of view. And that is so by no means because the two attitudes, stripped of all but their essentials, are irreconcilable. If we strip St. Theresa of her atrophied pseudo-science, which in her case was mostly theological 'science,' there was nothing in her attitude which would not have seemed to harmonize and to exalt that absolute adoration and service to natural truth which inspired Darwin. If we strip Darwin of that atrophied sense of poetry and the arts which he deplored, and that anaemic secular conception of the universe as a whole which he seems to have accepted without deplored, there was nothing in his attitude which would not have served to fertilize and enrich the spiritual exaltation of Theresa, and even to have removed far from her that temptation to accidie or slothfulness which all the mystics who are mystics only have recognized as their besetting sin, minimized as it was, in Theresa, by her practical activities. Yet being, as they

were, persons of supreme genius developed on opposite sides of their common human nature, an impassable gulf lies between them. It lies equally between much more ordinary people who yet show the same common character of being undergrown on one side, overgrown on the other.

This difficulty is not diminished when the person who is thus hypertrophied on one side and atrophied on the other suddenly wakes up to his one-sided state and hastily attempts to remedy it. The very fact that such a one-sided development has come about indicates that there has probably been a congenital basis for it, an innate disharmony which must require infinite patience and special personal experience to overcome. But the heroic and ostentatious manner in which these ill-balanced people hastily attempt the athletic feat of restoring their spiritual balance has frequently aroused the interest, and too often the amusement, of the spectators. Sir Isaac Newton, one of the most quintessentially scientific persons the world has seen, a searcher who made the most stupendous effort to picture the universe intelligently on its purely intelligible side, seems to have realized in old age, when he was indeed approaching senility, that the vast hypertrophy of his faculties on that side had not been compensated by a development on the religious side. He forthwith set himself to the interpretation of the Book of Daniel and puzzled over the prophecies of the Book of Revelation, with the same scientifically serious air as though he were analysing the spectrum. In reality he had not reached the sphere of religion at all; he had merely exchanged good science for bad science. Such senile efforts to penetrate, ere yet life is quite over, the mystery of religion recall, and indeed have a real analogy to, that final effort of the emotionally starved to grasp at love which has been called 'old maid's insanity'; and just as in this aberration the woman who has all her life put love into the subconscious background of her mind is overcome by an eruption of the suppressed emotions and driven to create baseless legends of which she is herself the heroine,

so the scientific man who has put religion into the subconscious and scarcely known that there is such a thing may become in the end the victim of an imaginary religion. In our own time we may have witnessed attempts of the scientific mind to become religious, which, without amounting to mental aberration, are yet highly instructive. It would be a double-edged compliment, in this connection, to compare Sir Oliver Lodge to Sir Isaac Newton. But after devoting himself for many years to purely physical research, Lodge also, as he has confessed, found that he had overlooked the religious side of life, and therefore set himself with characteristic energy to the task—the stages of which are described in a long series of books—of developing this atrophied side of his nature. Unlike Newton, who was worried about the future, Lodge became worried about the past. Just as Newton found what he was contented to regard as religious peace in speculating on the meaning of the Books of Daniel and Revelation, so Lodge found a similar satisfaction in speculations concerning the origin of the soul and in hunting out tags from the poets to support his speculations. So fascinating was this occupation that it seemed to him to constitute a great 'message' to the world. 'My message is that there is some great truth in the idea of pre-existence, not an obvious truth, nor one easy to formulate—a truth difficult to express—not to be identified with the guesses of re-incarnation and transmigration, which may be fanciful. We may not have been individuals before, but we are chips or fragments of a great mass of mind, of spirit, and of life—drops, as it were, taken out of a germinal reservoir of life, and incubated until incarnate in a material body.'<sup>1</sup> The genuine mystic would smile if asked to accept as a divine message these phraseological probings in the darkness, with their culmination in the gospel of 'incubated drops.' They certainly represent an attempt to get at a real fact. But the mystic is not troubled by speculations about the origin of the individual, or theories of pre-existence, fantastic myths which belong to the earlier Plato's stage

<sup>1</sup> Sir Oliver Lodge, *Reason and Belief*, p. 19.

of thought. It is abundantly evident that when the hypertrophied man of science seeks to cultivate his atrophied religious instincts it is with the utmost difficulty that he escapes from science. His conversion to religion merely means, for the most part, that he has exchanged sound science for pseudoscience.

Similarly, when the man with hypertrophied religious instincts seeks to cultivate his atrophied scientific instincts the results are scarcely satisfactory. Here, indeed, we are concerned with a phenomenon that is rarer than the reverse process. The reason may not be remote. The instinct of religion developed earlier in the history of the race than the instinct of science. The man who has found the massive satisfaction of his religious cravings is seldom at any stage conscious of scientific cravings; he is apt to feel that he already possesses the supreme knowledge. The religious doubters who vaguely feel that their faith is at variance with science are merely the creatures of creeds, the product of Churches; they are not the genuine mystics. The genuine mystics who have exercised their scientific instincts have generally found scope for such exercise within an enlarged theological scheme which they regarded as part of their religion. So it was that St. Augustine found scope for his full and vivid, if capricious, intellectual impulses; so also Aquinas, in whom there was doubtless less of the mystic and more of the scientist, found scope for the rational and orderly development of a keen intelligence which has made him an authority and even a pioneer for many who are absolutely indifferent to his theology.

Again we see that to understand the real relations of science and mysticism, we must return to ages when on neither side had any accumulated mass of dead traditions effected an artificial divorce between two great natural instincts. It has already been pointed out that if we go outside civilization, the divorce is not found; the savage mystic is also the savage man of

science, the priest and the doctor are one.<sup>1</sup> It is so also for the most part in barbarism, among the ancient Hebrews, for instance, and not only among their priests but even among their prophets. It appears that the most usual Hebrew word for what we term the 'prophet' signified 'one who bursts forth,' presumably into the utterance of spiritual verities, and the less usual words signify 'seer.' That is to say, the prophet was primarily a man of religion, secondarily a man of science. And that predictive element in the prophet's function, which to persons lacking in religious instinct seems the whole of his function, has no relationship at all to religion; it is a function of science. It is an insight into cause and effect, a conception of sequences based on extended observation and enabling the 'prophet' to assert that certain lines of action will probably lead to the degeneration of a stock, or to the decay of a nation. It is a sort of applied history. 'Prophecy' has no more to do with religion than have the forecasts of the Meteorological Bureau, which also are a kind of applied science in earlier stages associated with religion.

If, keeping within the sphere of civilization, we go back as far as we can, the conclusion we reach is not greatly different. The earliest of the great mystics in historical times is Lao-tze. He lived six hundred years earlier than Jesus, a hundred years earlier than Sakya-Muni, and he was more quintessentially a mystic than either. He was, moreover, incomparably nearer than either to the point of view of science. Even his occupation in life was, in relation to his age and land, of a scientific character; he was, if we may trust uncertain tradition, keeper of the archives. In the substance of

<sup>1</sup> It is scarcely necessary to point out that a differentiation of function has to be made sooner or later, and sometimes it is made soon. This was so among the Todas of India. 'Certain Todas,' says Dr. Rivers (*The Todas*, 1906, p. 249), 'have the power of divination, others are sorcerers, and others again have the power of curing diseases by means of spells and rites, while all three functions are quite separate from those of the priest or dairyman. The Todas have advanced some way towards civilization of function in this respect, and have as separate members of the community their prophets, their magicians, and their medicine-men in addition to their priests.'

his work this harmony of religion and science is throughout traceable; the very word *Tao*, which to Lao-tze is the symbol of all that to which religion may mystically unite us, is susceptible of being translated Reason, although that word remains inadequate to its full meaning. There are no theological or metaphysical speculations here concerning God (the very word only occurs once and may be a later interpolation), the soul, or immortality. The delicate and profound art of Lao-tze largely lies in the skill with which he expresses spiritual verities in the form of natural truths. His affirmations not only go to the core of religion but they express the essential methods of science. This man has the mystic's heart but he has also the physicist's touch and the biologist's eye. He moves in a sphere in which religion and science are one.

If we pass to more modern times and the little European corner of the world, around the Mediterranean shores, which is the cradle of our latter-day civilization, again and again we find traces of this fundamental unity of mysticism and science. It may well be that we never again find it in quite so pure a form as in Lao-tze, quite so free from all admixture alike of bad religion and bad science. The exuberant unbalanced activity of our race, the restless acquisitiveness—already manifested in the sphere of ideas and traditions before it led to the production of millionaires—soon became an ever-growing impediment to such unity of spiritual impulses. Among the supple and yet ferocious Greeks, indeed, versatility and recklessness seem at a first glance always to have stood in the way of approach to the essential terms of this problem. It was only when the Greeks began to absorb oriental influences, we are inclined to say, that they became genuine mystics, and as they approached mysticism they left science behind.

Yet there was a vein of mysticism in the Greeks from the first, not alone due to seeds from the East flung to germinate fruitfully in Greek soil, though possibly to that Ionian element of the Near East which was an essential part of the Greek spirit. All that Karl Joël

of Basel has sought to work out concerning the evolution of the Greek philosophic spirit has a bearing on this point. We are wrong, he believes, to look on the early Greek philosophers of Nature as mainly physicists, treating the religious and poetic elements of mysticism in them as mere archaisms, concessions, or contradictions. Hellas needed, and possessed, an early Romantic spirit, if we understand the Romantic spirit not merely through its reactionary offshoots but as a deep mystico-lyrical expression; it was comparable in early Greece to the Romantic spirit of the great creative men of the early Renaissance or the early nineteenth century, and the Apollinian classic spirit was developed out of an ordered discipline and formulation of the Dionysian spirit more mystically near to Nature.<sup>1</sup> If we bear this in mind we are helped to understand much in the religious life of Greece which seems not to harmonize with what we conventionally call 'classic.'

In the dim figure of Pythagoras we perhaps see not only a great leader of physical science, but also a great initiator in spiritual mystery. It is at any rate fairly clear that he established religious brotherhoods of carefully selected candidates, women as well as men being eligible, and living on so lofty and aristocratic a level that the populace of Magna Graecia who could not understand them decided out of resentment to burn them alive, and the whole order was annihilated about 500 B.C. But exactly how far these early Pythagoreans, whose community has been compared to the medieval orders of chivalry, were mystics we may imagine as we list, in the light of the Pythagorean echoes we find here and there in Plato. On the whole we scarcely go to the Greeks for a clear exposition of what we now term mysticism. We see more of it in Lucretius than we can divine in his master Epicurus. And we see it still more

<sup>1</sup> K. Joël, *Ursprung der Naturphilosophie aus dem Geiste der Romantik*, 1903; *Nietzsche und die Romantik*, 1905. But I am here quoting from Professor Joël's account of his own philosophical development in *Die Deutsche Philosophie der Gegenwart*, vol. i, 1921.

clearly in the Stoics.<sup>1</sup> We can indeed nowhere find a more pure and sincere statement than in Marcus Aurelius of the mystical core of religion as the union in love and harmony and devotion of the self with the not-self.

If Lucretius may be accounted the first of moderns in the identification of mysticism and science, he has been followed by many, even though, one sometimes thinks, with an ever-increasing difficulty, a drooping of the wings of mystical aspiration, a limping of the feet of scientific progress. Leonardo and Giordano Bruno and Spinoza and Goethe, each with a little imperfection on one side or the other, if not on both sides, have moved in a sphere in which the impulses of religion are felt to spring from the same centre as the impulses of science. Einstein, whose attitude in many ways is so interesting, closely associates the longing for pure knowledge with religious feeling, and he has remarked that 'in every true searcher of Nature there is a kind of religious reverence.' He is inclined to attach significance to the fact that so many great men of science—Newton, Descartes, Gauss, Helmholtz—have been in one way or another religious. If we cannot altogether include such men as Swedenborg and Faraday in the same group it is because we cannot feel that in them the two impulses, however highly developed, really spring from the same centre or really make a true harmony. We suspect that these men and their like kept their mysticism in a science-proof compartment of their minds, and their science in a mysticism-proof compartment; we tremble for the explosive result should the wall of partition ever be broken down.

The difficulty, we see again, has been that, on each hand, there has been a growth of non-essential traditions around the pure and vital impulse, and the obvious disharmony of these two sets of accretions conceals the underlying harmony of the impulses themselves. The possibility of reaching the natural harmony is thus

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Murray's Conway Memorial Lecture (1915) on *The Stoic Philosophy* is a finely sympathetic brief statement of the general Stoic standpoint in religion.

not necessarily by virtue of any rare degree of intellectual attainment, nor by any rare gift of inborn spiritual temperament—though either of these may in some cases be operative—but rather by the happy chance that the burden of tradition on each side has fallen and that the mystical impulse is free to play without a dead metaphysical theology, the scientific impulse without a dead metaphysical formalism. It is a happy chance that may befall the simple more easily than the wise and learned.

### III

The foregoing considerations have perhaps cleared the way to a realization that when we look broadly at the matter, when we clear away all the accumulated superstitions, the unreasoned prepossessions, on either side, and so reach firm ground, not only is there no opposition between science and mysticism, but in their essence, and at the outset, they are closely related. The seeming divorce between them is due to a false and unbalanced development on either side, if not on both sides.

Yet all such considerations cannot suffice to make present to us this unity of apparent opposites. There is, indeed, it has often seemed to me, a certain futility in all discussion of the relative claims of science and religion. This is a matter which, in the last resort, lies beyond the sphere of argument. It depends not only on a man's entire psychic equipment, brought with him at birth and never to be fundamentally changed, but it is the outcome of his own intimate experience during life. It cannot be profitably discussed because it is experiential.

It seems to me, therefore, that, having gone so far, and stated what I consider to be the relations of mysticism and science as revealed in human history, I am bound to go farther and to state my personal grounds for believing that the harmonious satisfaction alike of the religious impulse and the scientific impulse may be

attained to-day by an ordinarily balanced person in whom both impulses crave for satisfaction. There is, indeed, a serious difficulty. To set forth a personal religious experience for the first time requires considerable resolution, and not least to one who is inclined to suspect that the experiences usually so set forth can be of no profound or significant nature; that if the underlying motives of a man's life can be brought to the surface and put into words their vital motive power is gone. The greatest truths, as Goethe said, cannot be spoken. Even the fact that more than forty years have passed since the experience took place, scarcely suffices to make the confession of it easy. But I recall to mind that the first original book I ever planned (and in fact began to write) was a book, impersonal though suggested by personal experience, on the foundations of religion.<sup>1</sup> I put it aside, saying to myself I would complete it in old age, because it seemed to me that the problem of religion will always be fresh, while there were other problems more pressingly in need of speedy investigation. Now, it may be, I begin to feel the time has come to carry that early project a stage further.

Like many of the generation to which I belonged, I was brought up far from the Sunday-school atmosphere of conventional religiosity. I received little religious instruction outside the home, but there I was made to feel, from my earliest years, that religion is a very vital and personal matter with which the world and the fashion of it had nothing to do. To that teaching, while still scarcely more than a child, I responded in a whole-hearted way. Necessarily the exercise of this early impulse followed the paths prescribed for it by my environment. I accepted the creed set before me; I privately studied the New Testament for my own satisfaction; I honestly endeavoured, strictly in private, to mould my actions and impulses on what seemed to be Christian lines. There was no obtrusive outward evi-

<sup>1</sup> In connection with this scheme, it may be interesting to note, I prepared in 1879 a *questionnaire* on 'conversion,' on the lines of the investigations which some years later began to be so fruitfully carried out by the psychologists of religion in America.

dence of this; outside the home, moreover, I moved in a world which might be indifferent but was not actively hostile to my inner aspirations, and if the need for any external affirmation had become inevitable I should, I am certain, have invoked other than religious grounds for my protest. Religion, as I instinctively felt then and as I consciously believe now, is a private matter, as love is. This was my mental state at the age of twelve.

Then came the period of emotional and intellectual expansion, when the scientific and critical instincts began to germinate. These were completely spontaneous and not stimulated by any influences of the environment. To inquire, to question, to investigate the qualities of the things around us and to search out their causes, is as native an impulse as the religious impulse would be found to be if only we would refrain from exciting it artificially. In the first place, this scientific impulse was not greatly concerned with the traditional body of beliefs which were then inextricably entwined in my mind with the exercise of the religious instinct. In so far, indeed, as it touched them it took up their defence. Thus I read Renan's *Life of Jesus*, and the facile sentiment of this book, the attitude of artistic reconstruction, aroused a criticism which led me to overlook any underlying sounder qualities. Yet all the time the inquiring and critical impulse was a slowly permeating and invading influence, and its application to religion was from time to time stimulated by books, although such application was in no slightest degree favoured by the social environment. When, too, at the age of fifteen, I came to read Swinburne's *Songs before Sunrise*—although the book made no very personal appeal to me—I realized that it was possible to present in an attractively modern emotional light religious beliefs which were incompatible with Christianity, and even actively hostile to its creed. The process of disintegration took place in slow stages that were not perceived until the process was complete. Then at last I realized that I no longer possessed any religious faith. All the Christian dogmas I had been

brought up to accept unquestioned had slipped away, and they had dragged with them what I had experienced of religion, for I could not then so far analyse all that is roughly lumped together as 'religion' as to disentangle the essential from the accidental. Such analysis, to be effectively convincing, demanded personal experiences I was not possessed of.

I was now seventeen years of age. The loss of religious faith had produced no change in conduct, save that religious observances, which had never been ostentatiously performed, were dropped, so far as they might be without hurting the feelings of others. The revolution was so gradual and so natural that even inwardly the shock was not great, while various activities, the growth of mental aptitudes, sufficiently served to occupy the mind. It was only during periods of depression that the absence of faith as a satisfaction of the religious impulse became at all acutely felt. Possibly it might have been felt less acutely if I could have realized that there was even a real benefit in the cutting down and clearing away of traditional and non-vital beliefs. Not only was it a wholesome and strenuous effort to obey at all costs the call of what was felt as 'truth,' and therefore having in it a spirit of religion even though directed against religion, but it was evidently favourable to the training of intelligence. The man who has never wrestled with his early faith, the faith that he was brought up with and that yet is not truly his own—for no faith is our own that we have not arduously won—has missed not only a moral but an intellectual discipline. The absence of that discipline may mark a man for life and render all his work in the world ineffective. He has missed a training in criticism, in analysis, in open-mindedness, in the resolutely impersonal treatment of personal problems, which no other training can compensate. He is, for the most part, condemned to live in a mental jungle where his arm will soon be too feeble to clear away the growths that enclose him and his eyes too weak to find the light.

While, however, I had adopted, without knowing it,

the best course to steel the power of thinking and to render possible a patient, humble, self-forgetful attitude towards Nature, there were times when I became painfully, almost despairingly, conscious of the unsatisfied cravings of the religious impulse. These moods were emphasized even by the books I read which argued that religion, in the only sense in which I understood religion, was unnecessary, and that science, whether or not formulated into a creed, furnished all that we need to ask in this direction. I well remember the painful feelings with which I read at this time D. F. Strauss's *The Old Faith and the New*. It is a scientific creed set down in old age, with much comfortable complacency, by a man who found considerable satisfaction in the evening of life in the enjoyment of Haydn's quartets and Munich brown beer. They are both excellent things, as I am now willing to grant, but they are a sorry source of inspiration when one is seventeen and consumed by a thirst for impossibly remote ideals. Moreover, the philosophic horizon of this man was as limited and as prosaic as the aesthetic atmosphere in which he lived. I had to acknowledge to myself that the scientific principles of the universe as Strauss laid them down presented, so far as I knew, the utmost scope in which the human spirit could move. But what a poor scope! I knew nothing of the way that Nietzsche, about that time, had demolished Strauss. But I had the feeling that the universe was represented as a sort of factory filled by an inextricable web of wheels and looms and flying shuttles, in a deafening din. That, it seemed, was the world as the most competent scientific authorities declared it to be made. It was a world I was prepared to accept and yet a world in which, I felt, I could only wander restlessly, an ignorant and homeless child. Sometimes, no doubt, there were other visions of the universe a little less disheartening, such as that presented by Herbert Spencer's *First Principles*. But the dominant feeling always was that while the scientific outlook, by which I mainly meant the outlook of Darwin and Huxley, commended itself to me as presenting a sound

view of the world, on the emotional side I was a stranger to that world, if indeed I would not, with Omar, 'shatter it to bits.'

At the same time, it must be noted, there was no fault to find with the general trend of my life and activities. I was fully occupied, with daily duties as well as with the actively interested contemplation of an ever-enlarging intellectual horizon. This was very notably the case at the age of nineteen, three years after all vestiges of religious faith had disappeared from the psychic surface.

I was still interested in religious and philosophic questions, and it so chanced that at this time I read the *Life in Nature* of James Hinton, who had already attracted my attention as a genuine man of science with yet an original and personal grasp of religion. I had read the book six months before and it had not greatly impressed me. Now, I no longer know why, I read it again, and the effect was very different. Evidently by this time my mind had reached a stage of saturated solution which needed but the shock of the right contact to re-crystallize in forms that were a revelation to me. Here evidently the right contact was applied. Hinton in this book showed himself a scientific biologist who carried the mechanistic explanation of life even further than was then usual.<sup>1</sup> But he was a man of highly passionate type of intellect, and what might otherwise be formal and abstract was for him soaked in emotion. Thus while he saw the world as an orderly mechanism he was

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that for science the mechanistic assumption always remains; it is, as Vaihinger would say, a necessary fiction. To abandon it is to abandon science. Driesch, the most prominent 'vitalist' of our time, has realized this, and in his account of his own mental development (*Die Deutsche Philosophie der Gegenwart*, vol. i, 1921) he shows how, beginning as a pupil of Haeckel and working at zoology for many years, after adopting the theory of vitalism he abandoned all zoological work and became a professor of philosophy. When the religious spectator or the aesthetic spectator (as is well illustrated in the French review *L'Esprit Nouveau*) sees the 'machinery' as something else than machinery he is legitimately going outside the sphere of science, but he is not thereby destroying the basic assumption of science. We have, as Goethe said in this connection, to adopt a 'seesaw system' of philosophy, sometimes one point of view up, sometimes the other end up.

not content, like Strauss, to stop there and see in it nothing else. As he viewed it, the mechanism was not the mechanism of a factory, it was vital, with all the glow and warmth and beauty of life; it was, therefore, something which not only the intellect might accept, but the heart might cling to. The bearing of this conception on my state of mind is obvious. It acted with the swiftness of an electric contact; the dull aching tension was removed; the two opposing psychic tendencies were fused in delicious harmony, and my whole attitude towards the universe was changed. It was no longer an attitude of hostility and dread, but of confidence and love. My self was one with the Not-self, my will one with the Universal Will. I seemed to walk in light; my feet scarcely touched the ground; I had entered a new world.

The effect of that swift revolution was permanent. At first there was a moment or two of wavering, and then the primary exaltation subsided into an attitude of calm serenity towards all those questions that had once seemed so torturing. In regard to all these matters I had become permanently satisfied and at rest, yet absolutely unfettered and free. I was not troubled about the origin of the 'soul' or about its destiny; I was entirely prepared to accept any analysis of the 'soul' which might commend itself as reasonable. Neither was I troubled about the existence of any superior being or beings, and I was ready to see that all the words and forms by which men try to picture spiritual realities are mere metaphors and images of an inward experience. There was not a single clause in my religious creed because I held no creed. I had found that dogmas were—not as I had once imagined true, not as I had afterwards supposed false—but the mere empty shadows of intimate personal experience. I had become indifferent to shadows, for I had the substance. I had sacrificed what I held dearest at the call of what seemed to be Truth, and now I was repaid a thousandfold. Henceforth I could face life with confidence and joy, for my heart was at one with the world, and whatever might

prove to be in harmony with the world could not be out of harmony with me.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, it might seem to many, nothing whatever had happened; I had not gained one single definite belief that could be expressed in a scientific formula or hardened into a religious creed. That, indeed, is the essence of such a process. A 'conversion' is not, as is often assumed, a turning towards a belief. More strictly, it is a turning round, a revolution; it has no primary reference to any external object. As the greater mystics have generally understood, 'the Kingdom of Heaven is within.' To put the matter a little more precisely, the change is fundamentally a readjustment of psychic elements to each other, enabling the whole machine to work harmoniously. There is no necessary introduction of new ideas; there is much more likely to be a casting out of dead ideas which have clogged the vital process. The psychic organism — which in conventional religion is called the 'soul' — had not been in harmony with itself; now it is revolving truly on its own axis, and in doing so it simultaneously finds its true orbit in the cosmic system. In becoming one with itself it becomes one with the universe.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Long ago Edith Simcox (in a passage of her *Natural Law* which chanced to strike my attention very soon after the episode above narrated) well described 'conversion' as a 'spiritual revolution,' not based on any single rational consideration but due to the 'cumulative evidence of cognate impressions' resulting at a particular moment, not in a change of belief but in a total rearrangement and re-colouring of beliefs and impressions, with the supreme result that the order of the universe is apprehended no longer as hostile but as friendly. This is the fundamental fact of 'conversion,' which is the gate of mysticism. Hinton once defined religion as 'the home-feeling of the universe,' and similarly Bosanquet, in the beautiful little book of his old age, *What Religion Is* (1920), from which superfluous philosophy has fallen away, brings religion to its elemental assertion: 'We are at home in the universe.'

<sup>2</sup> How we are to analyse the conception of 'universe'—apart from its personal emotional tone which is what mainly concerns us—is of course a matter that must be left altogether open and free. Sir James Frazer at the end of his *Golden Bough* ('Balder the Beautiful,' vol. ii, p. 306) finds that the 'universe' is an 'ever-shifting phantasmagoria of thought,' or, he adds, suddenly shifting to a less idealistic and more realistic standpoint, 'shadows on the screen.' That is a literary artist's metaphysical way of describing the matter and could not occur to any one who was not familiar with the magic lantern which has now

The process, it will be seen, is thus really rather analogous to that which on the physical plane takes place in a person whose jaw or arm is dislocated, whether by some inordinate effort or some sudden shock with the external world. The miserable man with a dislocated jaw is out of harmony with himself and with all the universe. All his efforts cannot reduce the dislocation, nor can his friends help him; he may even come to think there is no cure. But a surgeon comes along, and with a slight pressure of his two thumbs, applied at the right spot, downwards and backwards, the jaw springs into place, the man is restored to harmony—and the universe is transformed. If he is ignorant enough, he will be ready to fall on his knees before his deliverer as a divine being. We are concerned with what is called a 'spiritual' process—for it is an accepted and necessary convention to distinguish between the 'spiritual' and the 'physical'—but this crude and imperfect analogy may help some minds to understand what is meant.

Thus may be explained what may seem to some the curious fact that I never for a moment thought of accepting as a gospel the book which had brought me a stimulus of such inestimable value. The person in whom 'conversion' takes place is too often told that the process is connected in some magical manner with a supernatural influence of some kind, a book, a creed, a church, or what not. I had read this book before and it had left me unmoved; I knew that the book was merely the surgeon's touch, that the change had its developed into the cinema, beloved of philosophers for its symbolic significance. Mr. Bertrand Russell, a more abstract artist, who would reject any such 'imaginative admixture' as he would find in Frazer's view, once severely refused to recognize any such thing as a 'universe,' but has since less austerely admitted that there is, after all, a 'set of appearances,' which may fairly be labelled 'reality,' so long as we do not assume 'a mysterious Thing-in-itself behind the appearances' (*Nation*, 6 Jan. 1923). But there are always some people who think that an 'appearance' must be an appearance of *something*, and that when a 'shadow' is cast on the screen of our sensory apparatus it must be cast by *something*. So every one defines the 'universe' in his own way, and no two people—not even the same person long—can define it in the same way. We have to recognize that even the humblest of us is entitled to his own 'universe.'

source in me and not in the book. I never looked into the book again; I cannot tell where or how my copy of it disappeared; for all that I know, having accomplished its mission, it was drawn up again to heaven in a sheet. As regards James Hinton, I was interested in him before the date of the episode here narrated; I am interested in him still.<sup>1</sup>

It may further be noted that this process of 'conversion' cannot be regarded as the outcome of despair or as a protective regression towards childhood. The unfortunate individual, we sometimes imagine, who is bereft of religious faith, sinks deeper and deeper into despondency until finally he unconsciously seeks the relief of his woes by plunging into an abyss of emotions, thereby committing intellectual suicide. On the contrary, the period in which this event occurred was not a period of dejection either mental or physical. I was fully occupied; I lived a healthy, open-air life, in a fine climate, amid beautiful scenery; I was revelling in new studies and the growing consciousness of new powers. Instead of being the ultimate stage in a process of

<sup>1</sup> The simple and essential outlines of 'conversion' have been obscured because chiefly studied in the Churches among people whose pre-possessions and superstitions have rendered it a highly complex process, and mixed up with questions of right and wrong living which, important as they are, properly form no part of religion. The man who waits to lead a decent life until he has 'saved his soul' is not likely to possess a soul that is worth saving. How much ignorance prevails in regard to 'conversion,' even among the leaders of religious opinion, and what violent contrasts of opinion—in which sometimes both the opposing parties are mistaken—was well illustrated by a discussion on the subject at the Church Congress at Sheffield in 1922. A distinguished Churchman well defined 'conversion' as a unification of character, involving the whole man—will, intellect, and emotion—by which a 'new self' was achieved; but he also thought that this great revolutionary process consisted usually in giving up some 'definite bad habit,' very much doubted whether sudden conversion was a normal phenomenon at all, and made no attempt to distinguish between that kind of 'conversion' which is merely the result of suggestion and auto-suggestion, after a kind of hysterical attack produced by feverish emotional appeals, and that which is spontaneous and of lifelong effect. Another speaker went to the opposite extreme by asserting that 'conversion' is an absolutely necessary process, and an Archbishop finally swept away 'conversion' altogether by declaring that the whole of the religious life (and the whole of the irreligious life?) is a process of conversion (*The Times*, 12 Oct. 1922). It may be a satisfaction to some to realize that this is a matter on which it is vain to go to the Churches for light.

descent, or a return to childhood. such psychic revolution may much more fittingly be regarded as the climax of an ascensional movement. It is the final casting off of childish things, the initiation into complete manhood.

There is nothing ascetic in such a process. One is sometimes tempted to think that to approve mysticism is to preach asceticism. Certainly many mystics have been ascetic. But that has been the accident of their philosophy, and not the essence of their religion. Asceticism has, indeed, nothing to do with normal religion. It is, at the best, the outcome of a set of philosophical dogmas concerning the relationship of the body to the soul and the existence of a transcendental spiritual world. That is philosophy, of a sort, not religion. Plotinus, who has been so immensely influential in our western world because he was the main channel by which Greek spiritual tendencies reached us, to become later embodied in Christianity, is usually regarded as a typical mystic, though he was primarily a philosopher, and he was inclined to be ascetic. Therein we may not consider him typically Greek, but the early philosophical doctrine of Plato concerning the transcendental world of 'Ideas' easily lent itself to developments favourable to an ascetic life. Plotinus, indeed, was not disposed to any extreme ascetic position. The purification of the soul meant for him 'to detach it from the body, and to elevate it to a spiritual world.' But he would not have sympathized with the harsh dualism of flesh and spirit which often flourished among Christian ascetics.<sup>1</sup> He lived celibate, but he was willing to regard sex desire as beautiful though a delusion.<sup>2</sup> When we put aside the philosophic doctrines with which it may be associated, it is seen that asceticism may be part of the inevitable discipline of life, and in that way profitable, as Spinoza understood it, but deliberate mortification is merely pathological.

<sup>1</sup> 'No real mysticism without asceticism in its full sense of spiritual training,' says Dom Cuthbert Butler (*Western Mysticism*, p. 32). But Christian ascetics seem seldom to have understood it in this wholesome sense.

<sup>2</sup> Dean Inge (*Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. ii, p. 165) has some remarks on Plotinus in relation to asceticism.

People who come in contact with the phenomenon of 'conversion' are obsessed by the notion that it must have something to do with morality. They seem to fancy that it is something that happens to a person leading a bad life whereby he suddenly leads a good life. That is a delusion. Whatever virtue morality may possess, it is outside the mystic's sphere. No doubt a person who has been initiated into this mystery is likely to be moral, because he is henceforth in harmony with himself, and such a man is usually, by a natural impulse, in harmony also with others. Like Leonardo, who through the glow of his adoration of Nature was as truly a mystic as St. Francis, even by contact with him 'every broken spirit is made serene.' But a religious man is not necessarily a moral man. That is to say, that we must by no means expect to find that the religious man, even when he is in harmony with his fellows, is necessarily in harmony with the moral laws of his age. We fall into sad confusion if we take for granted that a mystic is what we conventionally term a 'moral' man. Jesus, as we know, was almost as immoral from the standpoint of the society in which he moved as he would be in our society. That, no doubt, is an extreme example, yet the same holds good, in a minor degree, of many other mystics, even in very recent times. The satyrs and the fauns were minor divinities in antiquity, and in later times we have been apt to misunderstand their holy functions and abuse their sacred names.

Not only is there no necessary moral change in such a process, still less is there any necessary intellectual change. Religion need not involve intellectual suicide. On the intellectual side there may be no obvious change whatever. No new creed or dogma has been adopted.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jules de Gaultier (*La Philosophie Officielle et la Philosophie*, p. 150) refers to those Buddhist monks the symbol of whose faith was contained in one syllable: *Om*. But those monks, he adds, belonged to 'the only philosophic race that ever existed,' and by the side of their 'pure faith, placed on a foundation which no argumentation can upset, all the religious philosophies of the Judeo-Helleno-Christian tradition are but fairy-tales told to children.'

It might rather be said that, on the contrary, some pre-possessions, hitherto unconscious, had been realized and cast out. The operations of reason, so far from being fettered, can be effected with greater freedom and on a larger scale. Under favourable conditions the religious process, indeed, throughout directly contributes to strengthen the scientific attitude. The mere fact that one has been impelled by the insincerity of one's religious faith to question, to analyse, and finally to destroy one's religious creed, is itself an incomparable training for the intelligence. In this task reason is submitted to the hardest tests; it has every temptation to allow itself to be lulled into sleepy repose or cajoled into specious reconciliations. If it is true to itself here it is steeled for every other task in the world, for no other task can ever demand so complete a self-sacrifice at the call of Truth. Indeed the final restoration of the religious impulse on a higher plane may itself be said to reinforce the scientific impulse, for it removes that sense of psychic disharmony which is a subconscious fetter on the rational activity. The new inward harmony, proceeding from a psychic centre that is at one alike with itself and with the Not-self, imparts confidence to every operation of the intellect. All the metaphysical images of faith in the unseen—too familiar in the mystical experiences of men of all religions to need specification—are now on the side of science. For he who is thus held in his path can pursue that path with serenity and trust, however daring its course may sometimes seem.

It appears to me, therefore, on the basis of personal experience, that the process thus outlined is a natural process. The harmony of the religious impulse and of the scientific impulse is not merely a conclusion to be deduced from the history of the past. It is a living fact to-day. However obscured it may sometimes be, the process lies in human nature and is still open to all to experience.

## IV

If the development of the religious instinct and the development of the scientific instinct are alike natural, and if the possibility of the harmony of the two instincts is a verifiable fact of experience, how is it, one may ask, that there has ever been any dispute on the matter? Why has not this natural experience been the experience of all?

Various considerations may help to make clear to us how it has happened that a process which might reasonably be supposed to be intimate and sacred should have become so obscured and so deformed that it has been fiercely bandied about by opposing factions. At the outset, as we have seen, among comparatively primitive peoples, it really is a simple and natural process, carried out harmoniously with no sense of conflict. A man, it would seem, was not then overburdened by the still unwritten traditions of the race. He was comparatively free to exercise his own impulses unfettered by the chains forged out of the dead impulses of those who had gone before him.

It is the same still among uncultivated persons of our own race in civilization. I well remember how once, during a long ride through the Australian bush with a settler, a quiet uncommunicative man with whom I had long been acquainted, he suddenly told me how at times he would ascend to the top of a hill and become lost to himself and to everything as he stood in contemplation of the scene around him. Those moments of ecstasy, of self-forgetful union with the divine beauty of Nature, were entirely compatible with the rational outlook of a simple, hard-working man who never went to church for there was no church of any kind to go to, but at such moments had in his own humble way, like Moses, met God on a mountain. There can be no doubt that such an experience is not uncommon among simple folk unencumbered by tradition, even when of civilized race.

The burden of traditions, of conventions, of castes,

has too often proved fatal alike to the manifestation of the religious impulse and the scientific impulse. It is unnecessary to point out how easily this happens in the case of the religious impulse. It is only too familiar a fact how, when the impulse of religion first germinates in the young soul, the ghouls of the Churches rush out of their caverns, seize on the unhappy victim of the divine effluence and proceed to assure him that his rapture is, not a natural manifestation, as free as the sunlight and as gracious as the unfolding of a rose, but the manifest sign that he has been branded by a supernatural force and fettered for ever to a dead theological creed. Too often he is thus caught by the bait of his own rapture; the hook is firmly fixed in his jaw and he is drawn whither his blind guides will; his wings droop and fall away; so far as the finer issues of life are concerned he is done for and damned.<sup>1</sup>

But the process is not so very different on the scientific side, though here it is more subtly concealed. The youth in whom the natural impulse of science arises is sternly told that the spontaneous movement of his intelligence towards Nature and truth is nothing, for the one thing needful is that he shall be put to discipline, and trained in the scientific traditions of the ages. The desirability of such training for the effective questioning of Nature is so clear that both teacher and pupil are apt to overlook the fact that it involves much that is not science at all: all sorts of dead traditions, unrealized fragments of ancient metaphysical systems, prepossessions and limitations, conscious or unconscious, the obedience to arbitrary authorities. It is never made clear to him that science also is an art. So that the actual outcome may be that the finally accomplished man of science has as little of the scientific impulse as the fully-fledged religious man need have of the religious

<sup>1</sup> We must always remember that 'religion' and 'Church,' though often confused, are far from being interchangeable terms. 'Religion' is a natural impulse, 'Church' is a social institution. The confusion is unfortunate. Thus Freud (*Group Psychology*, p. 51) speaks of the probability of religion disappearing and socialism taking its place. He means not 'religion' but a 'Church.' We cannot speak of a natural impulse disappearing; an institution easily may.

impulse; he becomes the victim of another kind of ecclesiastical sectarianism.

There is one special piece of ancient metaphysics which until recently scientific and religious sects have alike combined to support: the fiction of 'matter,' which we passingly came upon when considering the art of thinking. It is a fiction that has much to answer for in distorting the scientific spirit and in creating an artificial opposition between science and religion. All sorts of antique metaphysical peculiarities, inherited from the decadence of Greek philosophy, were attributed to 'matter' and they were mostly of a bad character; all the good qualities were attributed to 'spirit'; 'matter' played the Devil's part to this more divine 'spirit.' Thus it was that 'materialistic' came to be a term signifying all that is most heavy, opaque, depressing, soul-destroying, and diabolical in the universe. The party of traditionalized religion fostered this fiction and the party of traditionalized science frequently adopted it, cheerily proposing to find infinite potentialities in this despised metaphysical substance. So that 'matter' which was on one side trodden underfoot was on the other side brandished overhead as a glorious banner.

Yet 'matter,' as psychologically-minded philosophers at last began to point out, is merely a substance we have ourselves invented to account for our sensations. We see, we touch, we hear, we smell, and by a brilliant synthetic effort of imagination we put together all those sensations and picture to ourselves 'matter' as being the source of them. Science itself is now purging 'matter' of its complicated metaphysical properties. That 'matter,' the nature of which Dr. Johnson, as Boswell tells us, thought he had settled by 'striking his foot with mighty force against a large stone,' is coming to be regarded as merely an electrical emanation. We now accept even that transmutation of the elements of which the alchemists dreamed. It is true that we still think of 'matter' as having weight. But so cautious a physicist as Sir Joseph Thomson long ago pointed out that weight is only an 'apparently' invariable property of matter.

So that 'matter' becomes almost as 'ethereal' as 'spirit,' and, indeed, scarcely distinguishable from 'spirit.' The spontaneous affirmation of the mystic that he lives in the spiritual world here and now will then be, in other words, merely the same affirmation which the man of science has more laboriously reached. The man, therefore, who is terrified by 'materialism' has reached the final outpost of absurdity. He is a simple-minded person who places his own hand before his eyes and cries out in horror: The Universe has disappeared!

We have not only to realize how our own prepossessions and the metaphysical figments of our own creation have obscured the simple realities of religion and science alike; we have also to see that our timid dread lest religion should kill our science, or science kill our religion, is equally fatal here. He who would gain his life must be willing to lose it, and it is by being honest to oneself and to the facts by applying courageously the measuring rod of Truth, that in the end salvation is found. Here, it is true, there are those who smilingly assure us that by adopting such a method we shall merely put ourselves in the wrong and endure much unnecessary suffering. There is no such thing as 'Truth,' they declare, regarded as an objective impersonal reality; we do not 'discover' truth, we invent it. Therefore your business is to invent a truth which shall harmoniously satisfy the needs of your nature and aid your efficiency in practical life. That we are justified in being dishonest towards truth has even been argued from the doctrine of relativity by some who failed to realize that that doctrine is here hardly relative. Certainly the philosophers of recent times, from Nietzsche to Croce, have loved to analyse the idea of 'truth' and to show that it by no means signifies what we used to suppose it signified. But to show that truth is fluid, or even the creation of the individual mind, is by no means to show that we can at will play fast and loose with it to suit our own momentary convenience. If we do we merely find ourselves, at the end, in a pool where we must tramp round and round in intellectual slush, out of which there

is no issue. One may well doubt whether any Pragmatist has ever really invented his truth that way. Practically, just as the best result is attained by the man who acts as though free-will were a reality and who exerts it, so in this matter, also, practically, in the end, the best result is attained by assuming that truth is an objective reality which we must patiently seek, and in accordance with which we must discipline our own wayward impulses. There is no transcendent objective truth, each one of us is an artist creating his own truth from the phenomena presented to him, but if in that creation he allows any alien emotional or practical considerations to influence him, he is a bad artist and his work is wrought for destruction. From the pragmatic point of view, it may thus be said, that if the use of the measuring rod of truth as an objective standard produces the best practical results that use is pragmatically justified. But if so, we are exactly in the same position as we were before the Pragmatist arrived; we can get on as well without him, if not better, for we run the risk that he may confuse the issues for us. It is really on the theoretic rather than the practical side that he is helpful.

It is not only the Pragmatist whose well-meant efforts to find an easy reconciliation of belief and practice, and indirectly the concord of religion and science, comes to grief because he has not realized that the walls of the spiritual world can only be scaled with much expenditure of treasure, not without blood and sweat, that we cannot glide luxuriously to Heaven in his motor car. We are also met by the old-fashioned Intuitionist.<sup>1</sup> It is no accident that the Intuitionist so often walks hand in

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that 'intuition' is a word with all sorts of philosophical meanings, in addition to its psychological meanings (which were studied some years ago by Dearborn in the *Psychological Review*). For ancient philosophic writers, from the Neo-Platonists on, it was usually a sort of special organ for coming in contact with supernatural realities; for Bergson it is at once a method superior to the intellect for obtaining knowledge and a method of aesthetic contemplation; for Croce it is solely aesthetic, and art is at once intuition and expression (by which he means the formation of internal images). For Croce, when the mind 'intuits' by 'expressing' the result is art. There is no 'religion' for Croce except philosophy.

hand with the Pragmatist; they are engaged in the same tasks. There is, we have seen, the impulse of science which must work through intelligence; there is, also, the impulse of religion in the satisfaction of which intelligence can only take a very humble place at the ante-chamber of the sanctuary. To admit, therefore, that reason cannot extend into the religious sphere is absolutely sound so long as we realize that reason has a co-ordinate right to lay down the rules in our sphere of intelligence. But in men of a certain mental type, the two tendencies are alike so deeply implanted that they cannot escape them: they are not only impelled to go beyond intelligence, but they are also impelled to carry intelligence with them outside its sphere. The sphere of intelligence is limited, they say, and rightly; the soul has other impulses besides that of intelligence and life needs more than knowledge for its complete satisfaction. But in the hands of these people the faculty of 'intuition' which is to supplant that of intelligence, itself results in a product which by them is called 'knowledge,' and so spuriously bears the hall-mark which belongs to the product of intelligence.

But the result is disastrous. Not only is an illegitimate confusion introduced, but by attributing to the impulse of religion a character which it is neither entitled to nor in need of, we merely discredit it in the eyes of intelligence. The philosopher of intuition, even in denying intelligence, is apt to remain so predominantly intelligent that in entering what is for him the sphere of religion he still moves in an atmosphere of rarefied intelligence. He is farther from the kingdom of heaven than the simple man who is quite incapable of understanding this philosopher's theories, but yet may be able to follow his own religious impulse without foisting into it an intellectual content. For even the simple man may be one with the great mystics who all declare that the unspeakable quality they have acquired, as Eckhart puts it, 'hath no image.' It is not in the sphere of intellection, it brings no knowledge; it is the outcome of the natural instinct of the individual soul. By

science we slake the thirst for knowledge; by religion we attain the bliss of contemplation.

No doubt there really are people in whom the instincts of religion and of science alike are developed in so rudimentary a degree, if developed at all, that they never become conscious. The religious instinct is not an essential instinct. Even the instinct of sex, which is much more fundamental than either of these, is not absolutely essential. A very little bundle of instincts and impulses is indispensable to a man on his way down the path of life to a peaceful and humble grave. A man's equipment of tendencies, on the lowest plane, needs to be more complex and diverse than an oyster's, yet not so very much more. The equipment of the higher animals, moreover, is needed less for the good of the individual than for the good of the race. We cannot, therefore, be surprised if the persons in whom the superfluous instincts are rudimentary fail to understand them, confusing them and overlaying them with each other and with much that is outside both. The wonder would be if it were otherwise.

When all deduction has been made of the mental and emotional confusions which have obscured men's vision, we cannot fail to conclude, it seems to me, that Science and Mysticism are nearer to each other than some would have us believe. At the beginning of human cultures, far from being opposed, they may even be said to be identical. From time to time, in later ages, brilliant examples have appeared of men who have possessed both instincts in a high degree and have even fused the two together, while among the humble in spirit and the lowly in intellect it is probable that in all ages innumerable men have by instinct harmonized their religion with their intelligence. But as the accumulated experiences of civilization have been preserved and handed on from generation to generation, this free and vital play of the instincts has been largely paralysed. On each side fossilized traditions have accumulated so thickly, the garments of dead metaphysics have been wrapped so closely around every manifestation alike of

the religious instinct and the scientific instinct—for even what we call 'common sense' is really a hardened mass of dead metaphysics—that not many persons can succeed in revealing one of these instincts in its naked beauty, and very few can succeed in so revealing both instincts. Hence a perpetual antagonism. It may be, however, we are beginning to realize that there are no metaphysical formulas to suit all men, but that every man must be the artist of his own philosophy. As we realize that it becomes easier than it was before to liberate ourselves from a dead metaphysics, and so to give free play alike to the religious instinct and the scientific instinct. A man must not swallow more beliefs than he can digest; no man can absorb all the traditions of the past; what he fills himself with will only be a poison to work to his own auto-intoxication.

Along all these lines we see more clearly than before the real harmony between *Mysticism* and *Science*. We see, also, that all arguments are meaningless until we gain personal experience. One must win one's own place in the spiritual world, painfully and alone. There is no other way of salvation. The Promised Land always lies on the other side of a wilderness.

## V

It may seem that we have been harping overmuch on a single string of what is really a very rich instrument, when the whole exalted art of religion is brought down to the argument of its relationship to science. The core of religion is mysticism, it is admitted. And yet where are all the great mystics? Why nothing of the Neo-Platonists in whom the whole movement of modern mysticism began, of their glorious pupils in the Moslem world, of Ramon Lull and Francis of Assisi and Francis Xavier and John of the Cross and George Fox and the *De Imitatione Christi* and *Towards Democracy*? There is no end to that list of glorious names and they are all passed by.

To write of the mystics, whether Pagan or Christian

or Islamic, is a most delightful task. It has been done, and often very well done. The mystics are not only themselves an incarnation of beauty, but they reflect beauty on all who with understanding approach them. Moreover, in the phenomena of religious mysticism we have a key—if we only knew it—to many of the most precious human things which on the surface may seem to have nothing in them of religion. For this is an art which instinctively reveals to us the secrets of other arts. It presents to us in the most naked and essential way the inward experience which has inspired men to find modes of expression which are transmutations of the art of religion and yet have on the surface nothing to indicate that this is so. It has often been seen in poetry and in music and in painting. One might say that it is scarcely possible to understand completely the poetry of Shelley or the music of César Franck or the pictures of Van Gogh unless there is somewhere within an intimation of the secret of mysticism. This is so not because of any imperfection in the achieved work of such men in poetry and in music and in painting—for work that fails to contain its own justification is always bad work—but because we shall not be in possession of the clue to explain the existence of that work. We may even go beyond the sphere of the recognized arts altogether, and say that the whole love of Nature and landscape, which in modern times has been so greatly developed, largely through Rousseau, the chief creator of our modern spiritual world, is not intelligible if we are altogether ignorant of what religion means.

But we are not so much concerned here with the rich and variegated garments the impulse of religion puts on, or with its possible transmutations, as with the simple and naked shape of those impulses when bared of all garments. It was peculiarly important to present the impulse of mysticism naked because, of all the fundamental human impulses, that is the one most often so richly wrapped round with gorgeous and fantastic garments that, alike to the eye of the ordinary man and the acute philosopher, there has seemed to be no living

thing inside at all. It was necessary to strip off all these garments, to appeal to simple personal direct experience for the actual core of fact, and to show that that core, so far from being soluble by analysis into what science counts as nothing, is itself, like every other organic natural function, a fact of science.

It is enough here, where we are concerned only with the primary stuff of art, the bare simple technique of the human dance, to have brought into as clear a light as may be the altogether natural mechanism which lies behind all the most magnificent fantasies of the mystic impulse, and would still subsist and operate even though they were all cast into the flames. That is why it has seemed necessary to dwell all the time on the deep-lying harmony of the mystic's attitude with the scientific man's attitude. It is a harmony which rests on the faith that they are eternally separate, however close, however intimately co-operative. When the mystic professes that, as such, he has knowledge of the same order as the man of science, or when the scientist claims that, as such, he has emotion which is like that of the man of religion, each of them deceives himself. He has introduced a confusion where no confusion need be; perhaps indeed he has even committed that sin against the Holy Ghost of his own spiritual integrity for which there is no forgiveness. The function of intellectual thought—which is that of the art of science—may, certainly, be invaluable for religion; it makes possible the purgation of all that pseudo-science, all that philosophy, good or bad, which has poisoned and encrusted the simple and spontaneous impulse of mysticism in the open air of Nature and in the face of the sun. The man of science may be a mystic, but cannot be a true mystic unless he is so relentless a man of science that he can tolerate no alien science in his mysticism. The mystic may be a man of science, but he will not be a good man of science unless he understands that science must be kept for ever bright and pure from all admixture of mystical emotion; the fountain of his emotion must never rust the keenness of his analytic scalpel. It is

useless to pretend that any such rustiness can ever convert the scalpel into a mystical implement, though it can be an admirable aid in cutting towards the mystical core of things, and perhaps if there were more relentless scientific men there would be more men of pure mystic vision. Science by itself, good or bad, can never be religion, any more than religion by itself can ever be science, or even philosophy.

It is by looking back into the past that we see the facts in an essential simplicity less easy to reach in more sophisticated ages. We need not again go so far back as the medicine-men of Africa and Siberia. Mysticism in pagan antiquity, however less intimate to us and less seductive than that of later times, is perhaps better fitted to reveal to us its true nature. The Greeks believed in the spiritual value of 'conversion' as devoutly as our Christian sects, and they went beyond most such sects in their elaborately systematic methods for obtaining it, no doubt for the most part as superficially as has been common among Christians. It is supposed that almost the whole population of Athens must have experienced the Eleusinian initiation. These methods, as we know, were embodied in the mysteries associated with Dionysus and Demeter and Orpheus and the rest, the most famous and typical being those of Attic Eleusis.<sup>1</sup> We too often see those ancient Greek mysteries through a concealing mist, partly because it was rightly felt that matters of spiritual experience were not things to talk about, so that precise information is lacking, partly because the early Christians, having their own very similar mysteries to uphold, were careful to speak evil of pagan mysteries, and partly because the pagan mysteries no doubt really tended to degenerate with the general decay of classic culture. But in their large

<sup>1</sup> The modern literature of the Mysteries, especially of Eleusis, is very extensive and elaborate in many languages. I will only mention here a small and not very recent book, Cheetham's Hulsean Lectures on *The Mysteries Pagan and Christian* (1897), as for ordinary readers sufficiently indicating the general significance of the Mysteries. There is, yet briefer, a more modern discussion of the matter in the chapter on 'Religion' by Dr. W. R. Inge in R. W. Livingstone's useful collection of essays, *The Legacy of Greece*, 1921.

simple essential outlines they seem to be fairly clear. For just as there was nothing 'orgiastic' in our sense in the Greek 'orgies,' which were simply ritual acts, so there was nothing, in our sense, 'mysterious' in the mysteries. We are not to suppose, as is sometimes supposed, that their essence was a secret doctrine, or even that the exhibition of a secret rite was the sole object, although it came in as part of the method. A mystery meant a spiritual process of initiation, which was indeed necessarily a secret to those who had not yet experienced it, but had nothing in itself 'mysterious' beyond what inheres to-day to the process in any Christian 'revival,' which is the nearest analogue to the Greek mystery. It is only 'mysterious' in the sense that it cannot be expressed, any more than the sexual embrace can be expressed, in words, but can only be known by experience. A preliminary process of purification, the influence of suggestion, a certain religious faith, a solemn and dramatic ritual carried out under the most impressive circumstances, having a real analogy to the Catholic's Mass, which also is a function, at once dramatic and sacred, which culminates in a spiritual communion with the Divine—all this may contribute to the end which was, as it always must be in religion, simply a change of inner attitude, a sudden exalting realization of a new relationship to eternal things. The philosophers understood this; Aristotle was careful to point out, in an extant fragment, that what was gained in the mysteries was not instruction but impressions and emotions, and Plato had not hesitated to regard the illumination which came to the initiate in philosophy as of the nature of that acquired in the mysteries. So it was natural that when Christianity took the place of Paganism the same process went on with only a change in external circumstances. Baptism in the early Church—before it sank to the mere magical sort of rite it later became—was of the nature of initiation into a mystery, preceded by careful preparation, and the baptized initiate was sometimes crowned with a garland as the initiated were at Eleusis.

When we go out of Athens, along the beautiful road that leads to the wretched village of Eleusis, and linger among the vast and complicated ruins of the chief shrine of mysticism in our western world, rich in associations that seem to stretch back to the Neolithic Age and suggest a time when the mystery of the blossoming of the soul was one with the mystery of the upspringing of the corn, it may be that our thoughts by no unnatural transition pass from the myth of Demeter and Kore to the remembrance of what we may have heard or known of the manifestations of the spirit among barbarian northerners of other faiths, or of no faith, in far Britain and America, and even of their meetings of so-called 'revival.' For it is always the same thing that Man is doing, however various and fantastic the disguises he adopts. And sometimes the revelation of the new life, springing up from within, comes amid the crowd in the feverish atmosphere of artificial shrines, maybe soon to shrivel up, and sometimes the blossoming forth takes place, perhaps more favourably, in the open air and under the light of the sun and amid the flowers, as it were to a happy faun among the hills. But when all the disguises have been stripped away, it is always and everywhere the same simple process, a spiritual function which is almost a physiological function, an art which Nature makes. That is all that need here be said.

With love and best regards to all my friends in America and elsewhere, and with every blessing upon them.

## THE ORIGIN OF WAR

‘THERE have always been wars; there always will be wars.’ That has ever been the creed, expressed or implied, of the militarist, more devoutly held than ever in the face of threats to supersede war. Even the man of science falls into the snare. Thus, Dr. F. A. Woods, in his study *Is War Diminishing?*—carried out with much pride of objectivity—seems to take for granted that war, even though it may possibly be increasing in intensity, existed at the beginning, and asserts, indeed, that societies could not be constituted without war. Yet, have there always been wars?

Our assumptions on this point, like so many beliefs that have become mere superstitions, date from a time when knowledge of the past was much less extensive than it is now. Even thirty years ago it was possible for so cautious an investigator as Maine to talk, in his *International Law*, about the ‘universal belligerency of primitive mankind,’ and to assert, quite as a matter of course, that ‘it is not peace which was natural and primitive and old, but rather war,’ and he added, with a lofty superiority at which now we may smile, ‘war more atrocious than we, with our ideas, can easily conceive.’ All the prominent authors meekly followed in the same path—Spencer, Bagehot, Topinard, Steinmetz, McDougall and the rest. There were, indeed, some on the other side, but they were not the leaders of the mob, and few marked them. Darwin, with his doctrine of natural selection, seemed to the majority to be on their side, especially in Germany, though war had really nothing to do with Darwin’s natural selection. Man was born out of war, it was believed, and his whole civilization is based on war. A little reflection might have suggested that a creature so helpless in his native state as man, and with a more prolonged infancy than any other creature, was hardly likely, if ontogeny reproduces phylogeny, to have been the outcome of war.

That consideration was put forward by Letourneau in his large book, *La Guerre*, in 1895, but Letourneau was not usually an original investigator or a profound thinker, and his opinions on the origin of war were neglected.

In the present century, however, the whole question has been placed on a new basis: The archaeologist and the anthropologist have here unconsciously co-operated to the same end, the one by working among primitive peoples of old, and the other among their modern representatives in savage lands to-day. It must be remembered that man's appearance on the earth dates from a vastly earlier period than was supposed even half a century ago. It is now not uncommon to date the time when species that could fairly be called human first began to appear at about a million years back, of which the brief period of less than three thousand years we call historical is but an insignificant fraction. That, it is true, is but plausible conjecture. We cannot even be precise concerning the existence of known men as the founders of culture by their invention of recognizable and indestructible instruments of labour. The geological evidence is held to indicate that Chellean man, who first made tools that were both permanent and undoubtedly human, may have lived from thirty to one hundred thousand years ago,<sup>1</sup> so that of the continuous history of human culture, as distinguished from the history of man, our historical period is in any case a small part. To say, therefore, as we certainly can, that wars have raged throughout our 'historical' period not only tells us almost nothing about the long history of man, it tells us but little about the evolution of human culture.

The vast hiatus thus revealed was at one time easily filled up by summary thinkers. Fighting exists among animals, they said; fighting exists among men to-day; therefore there has been fighting all the time. But that is a little too simple. It is true that many animals can fight, being naturally furnished with weapons. Fighting, however, and war are by no means the same thing.

<sup>1</sup> The higher estimate is that of Osborn (*Men of the Old Stone Age*) who now (*Origin and Evolution of Life*) adds another 25,000 years.

Here, indeed, we enter a field where there are differences of definition. Lagorrette, in his large and useful book *Le Rôle de la Guerre*, found twelve years ago that at least one hundred and fifty definitions of war had been put forth, and since then the number has greatly increased. But there cannot be much doubt that, roughly speaking, we mean by war an organized attack by the whole community on another community of the same species. The combats of animals—even apart from the fact that when with members of their own species they are rarely fatal and often approximate to play—cannot be said even remotely to resemble war.<sup>1</sup> There are two notable exceptions—though even here fighting scarcely attains the exact definition of warfare—among the ants and among the bees, the only creatures that have attained a kind of culture comparable to man's. They may also be said to be the only two groups, outside men, combining density of population with the ownership of property. These are two significant facts which we must always bear in mind when we are discussing the origin of war.

Man of the early Stone Age—that is to say, Palaeolithic Man—in his various successive species and throughout his long career of fifty thousand or more years, was always primarily a hunter. His weapons were for use against animals, not against himself. A hunting population is thinly spread over a large area. There was but little accumulated property. There were boundaries between the hunting-grounds of different communities, but these boundaries were sacred, and as no one would think of violating them they could not form a cause of quarrels. Animals were of far more interest to man than man was to himself. Palaeolithic art, which is often quite modern in its admirable expressiveness of line, is mainly concerned with animals; men appear but rarely, and then usually as hunters, bearing a light, small spear, and usually naked, not equipped against the assaults of enemies, recalling the Bathurst Islanders as described by Basedow, with pointed wooden spears a little thicker than lead pencils,

<sup>1</sup> P. Chalmers Mitchell, *Evolution and the War*, 1915.

aimed with precision, but easy for human beings to dodge.<sup>1</sup> War at the outset, in Deniker's opinion, was a species of man-hunt, carried out with no weapons but those used in hunting. War, however, required motives as well as methods, and the primitive man-hunt is not necessarily war, but usually a juridical process, the origin of our law courts; and even when its justice was not accepted, so that a series of vendettas followed, that was still a process going on within the community, and not what may properly be termed war.

Some of these statements, obviously, cannot be founded on the observation of primitive Palaeolithic society. Here we encounter a consideration which formerly caused trouble. We cannot, that is, take for granted that what we find among savages to-day tells us anything about primitive man. Many changes may have taken place during the indefinite thousands of years since man was really primitive, and even where there seem to have been but few changes that very fact may indicate that we are dealing with an exceptional people outside the main current of humanity. To-day, however, we are no longer reduced to mere assumptions in this matter. We are learning so much about the configuration and the activities alike of primitive man and of modern savages that we begin to know when and where they may be to some extent correlated. In this way we are able to assert positively that the culture of the Mousterians survives among the Australians, that of the Aurignacians among the Bushmen, and that of the Magdalenians among the Eskimo. It has been found possible to go farther and to surmise that in each case the modern people is actually descended from the Palaeolithic people which it resembles in culture, though long since driven out of Europe by climatic changes. In each case there is really skeletal resemblance between the ancient and the modern people, and even the differences confirm the relationship, for the Australian and the Bushman both possess much smaller skulls than the Mousterian and the Aurignacian, having long since

<sup>1</sup> H. Basedow, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, vol. xlvi, 1913.

fallen into an easy routine of life under congenial climatic conditions; while the Eskimo, forced to maintain and even to develop the ancient culture under the perpetual challenge of a hostile climate, has retained the high skull capacity of the Magdalenian.<sup>1</sup> But, however that may be, we now realize that there are races living to-day whose culture, even in details, resembles that of Palaeolithic Man in Europe fifteen and twenty thousand years ago.

During the past ten years, and in part under the inspiration of Professor Westermarck, the problem of the origin of war has been approached afresh by various workers from different sides. Mention may be made of the study made by Mr. G. C. Wheeler of Australian tribes. Wheeler finds that, 'in contrast with the loose ideas generally held, war in the tribe cannot be deemed a normal condition,' while, indeed, wars in the full modern sense of the word, 'wars for conquest, are not to be found.'<sup>2</sup> What appears to us as 'war' among the Australians is simply either the carefully regulated punishment of an offender, without bloodshed if the offence is not serious, or it is revenge in which a band of the kinsmen of a dead man, and any others who choose to join, set out to take blood vengeance on another tribe. Wheeler makes no reference to Letourneau, but he confirms his conclusion that primitive 'war' is mainly juridical, and always regulated, like a duel. Even in this sense war is exceptional, and war in the sense of a whole tribe taking the field against another tribe has no existence. 'Peace, not war, is the normal condition of the Australian tribes.' Among the Bushmen, whose social organization is very low, although their intelligence is high, there is even less to be said of war, while the Eskimo in their most characteristic groups know no war at all, and Ross found at Behring Strait that it was impossible to explain to them what war is. So much for the modern representatives of Mousterians and Aurignacians and Magdalenians.

<sup>1</sup> See Professor Sollas's attractive book, *Ancient Hunters*.  
<sup>2</sup> *The Tribe and Intertribal Relations in Australia*, 1910.

But it is now possible, also, to attack the problem from the other end. We may turn, that is to say, from the anthropologists to the archaeologists, and ask what evidence they have dug up of warfare in primitive times. The result is the same. We do not find the weapons of warfare or the wounds of warfare. It is not until, at the end of the Palaeolithic period, we come on the splendid Mediterranean man of Cro-Magnon, who is still amongst us, if, indeed, he is not the immediate prototype of the modern fair long-heads of Europe, that we begin to suspect a taste for fighting. These people have been called the Pre-Neolithic race, and many years ago Lapouge declared, in his pioneering book *Les Sélections Sociales*, that there were no wars or murders before Neolithic times; that statement is too absolute, but we may agree that it is with civilization that the art of killing developed—that is to say, within the last ten or twelve thousand years, the time which marks the arrival of the Neolithic peoples who have never been dispossessed by any new climatic change or any hostile invasion from outside. Yet our Neolithic ancestors could have made but little progress in warfare. They prepared the ground for war; they planted the seeds. They were not primarily hunters, but agriculturists, and herdsmen, and domesticators of animals, and industrial workers. That is to say that, unlike the men of all the early ages, they were living in compact and populous communities which with a high birth-rate might expand beyond their own proper boundaries, and they were accumulating property which might come to be regarded as booty. Yet those Neolithic days were still in the main peaceful. The great Lake-cities of Central Europe which have yielded the secrets of Neolithic culture during the past half-century were not warlike and they have been said to represent one of the happiest periods in human history. They were indeed preparing the reasons for war, but they had not yet developed the methods of war. That came when they discovered the metals and found the ways of smelting ores. Then were brought into the world war's 'two main nerves, Iron and Gold,' as Milton called them, and

as they have remained during three thousand years. It is significant that the early legends, notably those of Greece, which deal with the origin of metals, tend to be evil and bloody. The Copper Age, the Bronze Age, above all the Iron Age, made it possible to fashion weapons of deadly effect. The history of the development of the sword out of the hunter's dagger is on the side of method the history of the origin of warfare. When in the long development of human art we come at length on the situla from Bologna of the Hallstatt or early Iron Period with the procession around it of warriors marching in regular order and uniform equipment, each man with helmet on head, great spear on his right arm and shield on his left, we know where we are, we begin to feel at home. But this was the climax of a long period during which the softer bronze prevailed, lending itself to more beautiful effects and to war that was still picturesque. During the great Bronze Aegean Period in which modern civilization was developed, Hogarth remarks that all the body armour that has been found is only of a ceremonial kind and not for service, that there are few representations of armed men, and that it seems doubtful whether any professional military class existed. But a beginning had been made, and it was during the Third Late Minoan Period (1000 B.C.) that art began to decay and swords to grow longer. The methods of warfare were slowly being adopted. In Britain, for instance, it seems to have been during the Bronze Age—between three and four thousand years ago—that strongholds commonly began to be needed.<sup>1</sup> Since then the impressiveness of war has steadily grown until it has become, as Bagehot remarked, 'the most showy fact in human history.' That acute if summary thinker, in his *Physics and Politics*, half a century ago pointed out that the fighting powers of mankind have grown continuously, while civilization and city life no longer make man unwarlike or unable to compete with barbarians.

To-day we can conclude that these propositions have been confirmed beyond possibility of doubt. It was in

<sup>1</sup> Rice Holmes, *Ancient Britain*, p. 95.

regard to the earlier stages that Bagehot's views were necessarily vague and incomplete. A more extensive and accurate statement of the place of war with special reference of its earlier phases was reached just before the Great War by a Finnish scholar, Rudolf Holsti, writing in English, in *The Relation of War to the Origin of the State*, doubtless the most important summary of facts and conclusions we possess on this long-debated question. Savages, Holsti shows, are on the whole not warlike, although they often try to make out that they are terribly bloodthirsty fellows; it is only with difficulty that they work themselves up to fighting pitch, and even then all sorts of religious beliefs and magical practices restrain warfare and limit its effects. Even among the fiercest peoples of East Africa the bloodshed is usually small. Speke mentions a war that lasted three years; the total losses were three men on each side. In all parts of the world there are peoples who rarely or never fight; and if, indeed, the old notion—repeated without any evidence by a long succession of writers down to Rignano—that primitive peoples are in chronic warfare of the most ferocious character were really correct humanity could not have survived. Primitive man had far more formidable enemies than his own species to fight against, and it was in protection against these, and not against his fellows, that the beginnings of co-operation and the foundations of the State were laid. War was a result, and not a cause, of social organization.

'I rejoice that the number and duration of wars are diminishing in the world,' wrote Leroy-Beaulieu early in the present century, and it is a thought that has appealed to many of us. We have too often overlooked the additional fact which the same writer casually adds: 'It is true they are more terrible and involve vaster ruin.' We realize now that this addendum is important; we begin to see that a primitive war lasting three years with a total of six deaths gives place in our present phase of civilization to a war lasting four years with a total of six million deaths. And such are our excitable human brains that the greater the magnitude of war,

the greater its fascination. The adulation of war seems to have reached a climax during the nineteenth century, in which century also—note the significant correlation—the ruthless movement of commercial expansion and the reckless movement of the rising birth-rate likewise each reached their climacteric period. In the humane eighteenth century, before the Industrial Revolution, men were in spirit, however it might be with their practice, against war. Kant, the last thinker of the century, the offspring of Hume and of Rousseau, reflected that spirit. But in the nineteenth century, however their creed might differ at other points, at this point representative men were at one. Fervent Christians like De Maistre, philosophers like Hegel, advanced social reformers like Proudhon, emotional rhetoricians like Ruskin, though they might possibly allow that war in itself may be evil, were equally with Moltke and the militarists lost in enthusiasm for its magnificent results. Even before their time, Mandeville, that *enfant terrible* of our conventional pillars of society, had summed up their creed: 'The moment Evil ceases Society must be spoiled, if not totally dissolved.' But he had been silenced with a prolonged 'Sh!'

To-day, however, we are in a better position than the men of any previous age to estimate the results of war, magnificent or otherwise. It so happens, as we have seen, that by the labours of archaeologists and anthropologists we are also in a better position to estimate philosophically the place of war in civilization. It probably began late in the history of mankind; it developed slowly out of animal hunting by way of a regulated attempt to secure justice as well as the gratification of revenge; it was immensely stimulated by the discovery of the metals, and especially iron; above all, it owed its expansion to two great forces, the attractive force of booty and commercial gain in front, and the propulsive force of a confined population with a high birth-rate behind.

In the rise of war we foresee its fall, and in its causes we read its decay. We may put aside the fantasies of

those who once imagined that the supreme power of love and sympathy would one day swallow up war. The great human lovers, prepared to love even their enemies, are a negligible minority which shows no signs of increase, and even Christianity was able to prevent its followers from enlisting for scarce three centuries. Among ordinary mortals, as is too often forgotten, love is the obverse of an emotion of which hatred is the reverse; we cannot have one without the other; that the emotion is, as the psychologist says nowadays, ambivalent, is clear to any one who analyses the utterances of hatred, from whichever side emanating, during the Great War; they are the outbursts of violated love and sympathy. Abolish love and hate would disappear. Nor is there any more reliance to be placed on reason than on love. That reason is but a tool in the hands of the passions has since Spinoza been a truism. War is bound up with passions, and can only be so treated. Letourneau, and more recently Nicolai in his admirable *Biology of War*, have compared it to cannibalism. Like war, cannibalism is not strictly primitive; it is not usually found among the carnivorous animals; it has no existence among the lowest savages; it develops slowly with a higher degree of culture; it becomes bound up with religion and with morals, though in different systems, since some people eat only their friends and others only their enemies; it is not only a duty and an aspiration, it is also the gratification of an appetite, for all the evidence goes to show that human flesh is of all meats the most delicious. Yet cannibalism, with all its manifold deep roots in human nature and culture, has disappeared with a rapidity for which, as Westermarck observes, there is hardly a parallel in the history of morals.<sup>1</sup> And it has disappeared, not through love or through reason—to neither of which, indeed, was it really antagonistic—but through a process of sublimation, under the stress of an impulse, an aesthetic impulse, which among ourselves has left only its final transforma-

<sup>1</sup> Westermarck has dealt with the history of cannibalism in his *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, vol. ii, chap. xlvi.

tion in the most spiritual sacrament of the Christian Church. There are, as Montaigne long ago remembered, much more terrible things in civilized war than the barbarian roasting and eating his dead relatives,<sup>1</sup> and we may surely expect that they, too, will one day arouse even a more profound disgust.

We can see the line along which war must eventually disappear even without any active human interference. Its two causes are already decaying. The excessive birth-rate is falling, and necessarily falls with every rise in culture. Excessive industrialism has likewise passed its climax; there is no more world left to fight for; and with the regularization of industrial and commercial activities, of the whole material side of life, the economic cause of war falls away, and the energy thus released is free for sublimation into other and possibly more exalted forms of human activity.

Whether we are to-day approaching the first great step in this process of sublimation is still open to doubt. War is so young in the world, its fascination remains so strong, and Man, though he seems so delicate, has proved so tough, and so remarkably impervious to facts. When, indeed, we contemplate Man in the spirit in which the author of *Job* contemplated Behemoth, the Hippopotamus, we may well exclaim in wondering awe:

He is chief of the ways of God:  
And who can measure the thickness of his skull?

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<sup>1</sup> Montaigne, *Essais*, book i, chap. xxx. 'I think,' he wrote, 'there is more barbarism in eating a man alive, tearing him to pieces by torments and hells, than in eating him dead.'

## EUROPE

WHEN we glance at a map of the world, the eye catches its large firm outlines and passes over as negligible that broken corner of a great continental mass which we call Europe. Yet let us look more closely. Then we may realize that what at first had seemed the ~~jagged~~ and half-melted edge of a continent is really a delicately and artfully carved piece of work such as we find nowhere else on the whole design outspread before us. We realize that the artist who made the world, elsewhere content, on the whole, to mould huge masses or great blank spaces, has here used his finest graver and brooded with his most loving smile over the minute configuration of land and water, so as to achieve the maximum of harmonious diversity with the elimination of all extremes in a temperate region sheltered from the withering blasts of the South and the icy devastation of the North, bathed by the warm and yet stimulating currents of air and ocean.

We search in vain for any similar achievement of art among the blank oceans of the world, its vast barren plains, its oppressive mountain masses. Only at one spot, and then on a much smaller scale, on the eastern edge of the same huge continental mass, can we find in a climate as of Southern Europe something of the same delicate configuration. There, on the coast of China and in Korea and in Japan, was the home of an elect people of artists and moralists, who alone in all the world rivalled and sometimes excelled the men of Europe in profound vision and exquisite skill, weaving a dream of calm happiness and seeking to catch in its meshes the last evanescent gleams in the beauty of things, polishing to the highest point a little mirror and seeking how large a part of the great universe they could reflect in its smallest space. For in this subtle skill there was something miniaturish, and this admirable

perfection was the work of a blend of men to the making of whom all the great human stocks had not gone.

For if a fine artist fashioned Europe a consummate artist peopled it. Elsewhere in the world, on those vast plains, against those huge mountain chains, in the scattered islands of those oceans, the populations were everywhere formed of few or coarse racial elements, at the best but incongruously mixed or imperfectly refined. But on the outskirts of Europe were arrayed the finest tempered comparatively pure races of the world—the dark, long-headed Mediterranean whites to the South, the fair, long-headed Baltic whites to the North, the broad-headed Asiatic Alpine whites to the East—in such a manner that each stream could flow across Europe and mix with the others in compact harmonious blends at the maximum number of points of contact in this complexly featured land. In each little district two, and more often all three, of these races were blended, always with some slight diversity, to furnish the special tone and colour of the group, its own character in physical beauty and in spiritual production. Only here and there in scattered isolated spots were found small patches of pure race to give touches of bright colour, though not of creative energy, to the total harmony. In this exquisite process the men of every district were brought into blood relationship with the men of every other district. The men of each land were a little different, each nation with its own delicate individuality, yet all hearts were united by tenuous fibres stretching back to the common stocks, and whatever the men of one land said or did there were always responsive fibres to thrill sympathetically in the hearts of all other men. No more ingenious device to secure harmony was divinely possible. Europe resembled a beautiful old tapestry, diversified in tone and colour, yet with the same threads running everywhere through the design, binding it together and giving unity to the whole.

It was part of the marvellously happy position of Europe that while so placed as to attract and to retain the finest streams of human migration, and to mix these

slowly in endless variations of harmony, it was yet protected from all the grosser devastations of the outside world. On three sides surrounded, and yet not isolated, by the seas, on the fourth the great Russian plain served as a buffer against rude blows from the east. Thus the human streams that entered Europe could only filter through slowly; strength or address were needed by those who sought a home in the spot thus moulded with infinite precaution; there was always leisure here to generate energy, to elaborate cultures unique in all the world. The divine bull that bore Europa to the Cretan home of Zeus and tossed her on the soil of Europe left her to develop the Aegean seed within her, in forms that were altogether European. The might of Asia only touched the outermost edge of Europe, to raise a few prehistoric Cyclopean walls which left no memory of themselves save in obscure legend. Elsewhere in the large coarse outlines of the world's map men might lose themselves in dreams of objective physical might or of infinite impersonal Being to fit the huge world they lived in. But it was never so in Europe.

It was Europe that discovered men, individual, self-conscious men. Elsewhere Man had been a group, and always objectified and subordinate to ends larger than himself, eager to lose himself in something vast, in a horde or in a dynasty, in a pyramid or a Nirvana. Man created gods and worshipped them. But on the shores of the Mediterranean the divine was made flesh in the arrogant imagination of these daring Europeans.<sup>1</sup> Men themselves became gods. Men of art and men of science, makers of beauty and discoverers of truth,

<sup>1</sup> 'It was here [in Crete] that Mother Rhea fled to bear the King of Heaven that was to be, God made in the image of Man, while Father Kronos and the world he ruled clung to the Stone Child, the aniconic pillar-worship that expressed itself in the Bethels of the Semites and the Pillar Rooms at Knossos' (R. Burrows, *The Discoveries in Crete*, p. 5). It was hither that this same Zeus in the form of the bull bore Europa, the mother of Minos, the first lawgiver of European culture; and again, some thousand years later, on the coasts of this same Eastern Mediterranean, the homeland of the gods, the angel Gabriel, traditional chief of the cherubim or winged-bull angels, once more cast the divine seed into the child of man.

mystics and inventors, they became divine creators, for their creations were not collective agglomerations or vast abstractions, in which men lost themselves, but those products of personality in which men find themselves, made of the stuff of the living world, on the pattern of the Europe that bred them, temperate and measured, of infinite diversity and endless subtlety.

These men measured the stars and analysed their substance. In the fever of their own swiftly vibrating energies they discovered new forms of vibrating force in the physical world, to which all men before them had been blind and deaf, and they utilized these forces, as gods rather than as worshippers of gods, for the magnification of men, to bring them food, and to carry them swiftly through the earth and the sea and the air, and to cure their diseases or heal their wounds. All men have made to themselves representations of the world as they conceived it. But these men, in the penetration of their intelligence and the precision of their skill, so conceived the world that their representation of it could be controlled by their exact observations of it. They discovered that science is measurement.

They measured and analysed not only the stars but their own bodies and souls. They explored the consciousness of primitive animals vaguely reaching towards a soul. They traced back the first forms of their own bodies and the construction of their own minds, and sought to conceive their growth as a gradual and continuous whole. They penetrated beneath the complex surface of thoughts and feelings to grope to the hidden sources of their own obscure impulses. They revealed the mysteries and wide-ranging forces of love in the activities of man. They followed the clue of hunger to its last irradiations in the laws of human association and the formation of societies. They constructed in the Heaven of the Future the endlessly renewed vision of a Perfect Commonwealth.

Meanwhile, on their European corner of the earth, they built places to live in or to love, not as the manner of the great outside world had been, colossally massive

or sardonically fantastic, but in the image of man's soul, tenderly human, with the traces still clinging of their smiles and their tears. Slowly through the centuries they made their peaceful villages on the green banks of quiet streams, fit to soothe the hearts of all who lived in them or passed through them, their little towns on silent canals haunted by ghosts of a vanished past, their large cities which vibrated with the feverish rumours of their inextinguishable thirst for ever more life. They formed in the image of their dreams the great churches which are like jewels, so sacred that the eyes of those who gazed on them grew dim. They painted pictures, and their vision of the loveliness of air and earth and human things re-created the world on a diviner scale. They wrought statues, and all the secrets of the soul seemed entwined in the curves of their carven limbs.

Many and many a century has passed since Europa, with white hands clinging to the bull's horns, tremulous and so daring, was borne across the narrow sea, with the seed that was to be cast afar and change the spirit of the world. That great and commonplace world still pursued its slow and serene and laborious course, carrying on the everyday tasks of life. Yet the European ferment worked subtly in its veins. The impetus of European energy accelerated its motion. The vision of Europa became for ever entangled in its dreams. For the world realized (with secret thankfulness) that there will never be another Europe.

## THE STAR IN THE EAST

‘WE have seen a star in the East.’ We shall never know how many thousand years ago it was when that saying first arose among men as a conscious belief in human progress. We only know that it is still uttered in tones as fresh and youthful as ever. Only yesterday, indeed, we saw a star in the East, though on nearer view we called it ‘Bolshevism,’ and deciding that it was probably only a falling star, sinking straight to the Pit, we put our gold and frankincense and myrrh back into our hearts. It has happened to us so often before since the Son of Man was born. That is why those treasures of Man’s homage to Progress remain through the ages so little diminished. There is always a flaw, visible on nearer view. That has been so even in the most exquisite story the world has known to symbolize the coming of a ‘Prince of Peace’ to earth. ‘Peace on earth, good will toward men,’ the simple-minded enthusiasts of our Authorized Version thought it to mean; and three centuries later, on nearer view, their Revisers broke to us with gentle vagueness the sober truth that it really meant something much more like ‘Peace to men of good will.’ And that is a very different thing. How different we realize when we read in our newspapers the sayings and doings of our great leaders, and try to reckon on the fingers of one hand the number among them of ‘men of good will.’ If Christianity sometimes seems to have brought so little to men, it has perhaps, after all, brought as much as the angels promised.

One has noted in recent days a widespread disappointment with the world, not altogether dissipated by the joyous band which raises again the final chorus of Shelley’s *Hellas*. For even that exultant hymn, one may remark, is pierced by doubt and fear. The reasonableness of such a feeling one need not stay to argue. The world is as it has always been; the perfection of the

world, such as it is, remains the same. Human experience, likewise, remains in every age perfectly equal to its task. One is not called upon to defend the world in the forum of human caprice. The attempt to 'justify the ways of God to men' has always aroused a smile in the wise. The ways of Man are perhaps in more need of justification. It is a necessary task to adapt the Universe to Man, but it is sometimes also necessary to adapt Man to the Universe. When this adaptation is incomplete we are in the presence of a disease which calls for diagnosis.

The problem we have to deal with has been dramatically illustrated by the Russian Revolution. For generations, in and even out of Russia, millions of men have regarded a revolution in Russia as a chief ideal of human progress in Europe. It has been a light before the eyes of the most temperate political and social idealists; the more passionately eager to aid its realization have gladly gone to their death. Yet as soon as that revolution is achieved, with the usual friction and bloodshed, our spiritual attitude is automatically transformed. The governments of Europe, forgetting all their animosities, tumble over each other in their haste to overthrow an ideal realized in the accustomed manner which yet the wisest idealist never foresees. (There is the tragic figure of Kropotkin.) We are not, again, here concerned to consider the reasonableness of that attitude—the substitution of an injustice by a reversed injustice may well admit of conflicting judgments—but only to note the existence of the automatic mechanism by which every spiritual effort is at once compensated. The devout poet prayed that we might not seek

. . . to wind ourselves too high  
For sinful man beneath the sky.

But the prayer was perhaps unnecessary. There is a gravitation in human nature which corrects that. We have experienced it in recent years among ourselves. We arose in noble wrath to slay the spirit of greed and arrogance and hate in the hearts of our enemies, and

in the measure in which we succeeded we concurrently planted the seeds of the same passions in our own hearts. We learnt the law of the conservation of force in the moral world. For in the moral world, as in every other world, we cannot create more force than exists.

Remy de Gourmont was wont to insist on what he called the law of intellectual constancy in civilization. He based it on the memorable biological researches of Quinton, which have indicated that evolution—which as Spencer left it, Gourmont declared, arose in the void and pointed to some unknown Messianic end—is an adjustment, in part effected by the formation of new, better adapted species and in part by the action of intelligence, to maintain against the increasing hostility of a cosmos ever departing from the state in which life originated, those fixed and determined conditions of thermic, chemical, and osmotic constancy required by life. Every species possesses a constant and limited measure of force, but no more, wherewith to attain this vital and necessary end. Within the limits of the human species it seemed to Gourmont—and various distinguished thinkers and investigators have associated themselves with this conclusion—that there must be the same constancy in intellectual force, from prehistoric times until now. The achievements of to-day impress us more than the achievements, so far as we know them, of primitive man. We overlook the fact that the difference is accidental, the accident of position and the result of accumulated traditions. It makes a difference whether we are able to leap from the summit of a Himalaya or only from the plain; it makes a difference whether the sponge is full of water or dry. But the essential fact remains that the energy of the leap is the same from the mountain as it was of old from the plain, and that the capacity of the sponge has neither been increased nor diminished. There is evolution, but the natural evolution of animated beings is simply, said Gourmont, a succession of changes, rendered necessary by changes in the environment, to assure an

original constancy which is the pivot of the whole machine. If we apply this principle to human intelligence through the ages, we cannot fail to apply it also to morals, where, indeed, it is far less likely to be questioned. 'There will never be any more perfection than there is now,' declared Walt Whitman. And at the dawn of the modern scientific era, Leibnitz asserted that 'in any one hour there is the same motor action in the world as in any other hour.' It is so in the physical world, as the man of science has shown; it is so with the moral world, as human experience has never ceased to make clear. 'Evolution is a fact, Progress is a feeling.'

We are here in the presence of two phenomena, one objective and one subjective. On the one hand is the fact of evolution maintained by constant inevitable effort, from which, indeed, the individual may fall out, yet still maintained by the power of life that moves in the whole. On the other is the conception of Progress which the individual sets forth as the aim of his own activity, being thereby used to maintain the order of the world, which he imagines to be identical with his individual notion of Progress. But it is not thus identical, and so it comes about that the very conception by which he helps to maintain the world in its course is an illusion. It is thus that at the most exhilarating moment of his triumphal March of Progress, when the goal his imagination has created seems now at length within reach, he is pulled up, and with a sudden sense of despair he seems to himself to have pursued a mirage.

That is an experience which has of late come to many. It seemed to them a few years ago that the march of Progress was accelerated. They were overcome by the intoxication of their own movement. The great idea came to them that this war, unlike all wars that had gone before, was the War of Right against Might, a War to end War, a War to make the world safe for Democracy. In the course of time they found that they were not fighting against Might, but on the side

of Might, while for Right they looked around in vain; they found that the war was scarcely over before their leaders began to talk of the securities and safeguards necessary in view of the next war; they realized that the Democracies for which the world had been made safe were not theirs even if they may have been those of the men they had fought against. It is not the first time that the Star in the East has been pursued a little too swiftly, or, as the Greeks put it, the ravishing Syrinx, when at last Pan's hand touched her, turned to mere reeds, better fitted for art than for life.

Yet, let us always remember, we have no right to complain because we have failed to understand how the world is made. Men are not so good as we supposed, it seems to the simple-hearted idealists who witness the worst crimes committed by those who bear the most sacred banners. But it may be that men are better, and it is certain that they are different. It is part of the splendour of life that it never has been, and never can be, fitted into any ideal. It is part of our illusion to think that life is too small while in reality it is too large. Illusion and Reality are both part of Life, each supporting the other, and we cannot live sanely and completely unless we are loyal to both, not only, on the one hand, rendering unto God the things that be God's, but in the world of reality strenuously rendering unto Caesar the things that be Caesar's, dethronement and degradation when that seems meet.

We may perhaps look a little more deeply yet into the matter. The average man will probably accept quite innocently the assumption, just made, that Caesar's sphere is that of reality and God's that of illusion. And if he succeeds in being loyal to both he may make that assumption work. But many of us who seek to see clearly and wholly how the world is made find our profit in reversing that assumption. We also are loyal to both, but our reality is their illusion and our illusion is their reality. Until modern times this was the standpoint of all those who sought to see clearly and wholly how the world is made. It was the

attitude of the most religious and the most philosophic man who ever sat on an imperial throne. Marcus Aurelius, fortified from within, fulfilled his duties in the world, however austere, with admirable devotion; he adored the beauty of the universe, but he never imagined that the march of Progress or the goal of Perfection could be anywhere else than within. The standpoint of Jesus in this matter, so far as we may reasonably divine it, was the same as that of Marcus. He, too, without any exuberantly robust joy in living, considered the lilies, if only to point a moral; he came eating and drinking, he approved of paying taxes, he was on the side of justice and of pity in the world. But he never imagined any New Jerusalem made with hands, and his Kingdom of Heaven was in the heart. We may fairly regard an attitude in which the first of Christians is one with the last great pagan as a reasonably normal attitude. It has, at all events, these two supreme advantages: it makes what we call cynicism impossible; it makes that disillusion we see around us to-day equally impossible.

It is long since for the multitude the values became confused. In the Christian world, indeed, we have come to regard Judas Iscariot as the pioneer of that confusion by supposing that he sought to force his Master's hand, without quite realizing that we thereby make the arch-traitor the patron of all our attempts to set up the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Just fifteen centuries ago, after Rome had been sacked by the Goths, and Civilization seemed in downfall, the greatest and most influential teacher the Church ever claimed was writing his immortal treatise *De Civitate Dei*, still a living and instructive book to read to-day. St. Augustine's standpoint was not opposed to that of Marcus and of Jesus. He was not seeking to rebuild a Christianized Rome, he was seeking to replace it by a Heavenly City. But he worked out his conception with so passionate a sense for reality, the outcome of his perfervid temperament and his subtle intellect, that his book became the corner-stone of all vain attempts

to build a heavenly city on earth. It was the favourite reading of the Emperor Charlemagne, the least Christian of men in Christendom, and it has been the perpetual stimulus to that confusion of values between the inner world and the outer world, which is the fruitful source of inevitable disillusion even to this day. That is why the affirmation of even the simplest of eternal truths is never out of date, if we would avoid the risks of falling into a shallow cynicism or an enervating self-deception. While we seek to construct a reasonably sweet City of Man, with due regard to the quality of such material as society yields, we cannot afford to forget the affirmation of that great lyrical artist, as a modern man terms him, who proclaimed: 'The Kingdom of God is within you.'

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONFLICT

ONE of the finest of European thinkers, Jules de Gaultier, published shortly before the war an investigation of pacifism.<sup>1</sup> This essay, so much more timely than the writer knew, was specially concerned with Novicov's pacifism. Gaultier, with his usual calm and penetrative subtlety, easily demolished that too simple-minded enthusiast's conception of an approaching Utopia of mild uniformity, and set forth the essential place of conflict in the world. But he went beyond his text: he affirmed not merely the eternity of conflict, but also of that special form of it called War. Whether the distinguished French philosopher still complacently accepts the permanence of war in human affairs, or whether he now suspects that his defence of war was a manifestation of that Bovarism he has himself so luminously defined, there is no public evidence to show.

That confusion, however, between conflict and war—for it is as a confusion that it will here be regarded—has played a large part in the minds alike of those who approve and those who condemn war. The militarist is, as a matter of course, at one with the French philosopher in identifying war with all aspiring struggle, and naturally we find that Germany, as the classic land of militarism in our time, abounds in vigorous exponents of this view. Jules de Gaultier here finds Moltke as a strange bedfellow. It was in 1880 that Moltke wrote in his famous letter to Professor Bluntschli in London: 'Eternal peace is a dream, and not even a beautiful dream, and war is a part of God's world-order. In war are developed the noblest virtues of mankind: courage and sacrifice, fidelity and the willingness to sacrifice life itself. Without war the world would be swallowed up

<sup>1</sup> Jules de Gaultier, *Comment naissent les Dogmes*.

in materialism.'<sup>1</sup> The old man, whose own personal virtues were of an entirely peaceful and rural character, was unconsciously repeating (as his biographer, Jähn, admits) what had been said—and indeed better said, though in much the same words—forty years earlier by a more obscure German, Ottocar von Platen, but the fact that the saying was a mere cliché in current use only makes it the more significant. Nor is it necessary to ask whether Germany was ever so 'swallowed up in materialism' as after the successful wars through which Moltke guided her, for we are here concerned to unravel a delusion, and not to consider the imbecilities that delusion may lead to in human practice.

The militarist, however, would not have been able to cherish this delusion so long if the pacifist had not made the way easy for him. Indeed, a great part of the responsibility belongs to the pacifist, who usually claims to be in the field of philosophic thought, a field which the militarist is quite content to trample down contemptuously with a few conventional moral formulas. So that militarist and pacifist play into each other's hands like two accomplished jugglers, adroitly changing the ball they play with, which at one moment is Conflict and at another War, to the bewilderment of the spectator. Novicov, as a typical pacifist, is admirably adapted for this game.

Regarded less as a game than as a logical perversion, one may say that what we are concerned with here is a confusion between the species and the genus, so that we may talk about the genus and mean the species, or ostensibly vilify one species of the genus and really include another species. It is much the same as though an attack on the poisonous qualities of the deadly nightshade were to be met by an enthusiastic defence of the potato; since both plants belong to the same or allied orders, it is easy for the controversialist to typify the whole group either in the poisonous leaves of the one plant or the useful tubers of the other, according to the necessities of his argument. Conflict we may

<sup>1</sup> Max Jähn, *Feldmarschall Moltke*, pp. 620, 685. 1900.

regard as the genus and Warfare as a species—a species which we may, if we like, compare to the nightshade, but must in no case confound with the whole order.

This view, indeed, is not that of Pierre Bovet, in his recent book, *L'Instinct Combatif*. Approaching the question from the pedagogical standpoint, Bovet is one of those who confuse the species with the genus. For him all the forms of conflict, good or bad, are transmutations of warfare, mere varieties of the species. War, he argues, may be complicated into the modern struggle for existence, or deviated into wild competition, or objectivated into an interest in violence and bloodshed, or subjectivated as by the Jesuits or the Salvationists, or platonized into diplomacy and intellectual games, or, finally, in accordance with the part assigned to all the primary instincts by Freud, sublimated into the highest forms of social and spiritual activity, in art and morals and religion. Ingenious as this conception is, and even in a strictly limited sense true, it is hopelessly inadequate when we take a broader view of the phenomena. It is not even satisfactory, as Bovet himself admits, when we consider war itself, for, as he remarks, so far from being the outcome of a primary instinct, 'all that we know of modern wars associates them with the cupidity of the few rather than with the combativity of the many.' Moreover, Bovet's own data on the combative instinct in children show that it is a temporary phase in development, appearing on the average at the age of nine and passing away about the age of twelve. The child is the analogue of the race, and we shall probably best understand war in the past if we regard it as a passing phase of the world's childhood, useful, it may be, at the time of its manifestation, out of place alike in the earlier and the later phases of the race's development. But the great principles of conflict in life stand on a far wider basis, and are built into the structure of the world.

That is what a pacifist such as Novicov altogether fails to understand. To him Darwinism has no meaning. The collective murder of war is not merely a social

method of struggle ill adapted for the present phase of civilization, it is altogether without foundation in the world, and civilization consists in 'the adaptation of the planet to the need of man.' Mankind is thus regarded as an abstraction simplified almost to Euclidian proportions. At the utmost it becomes a flock moved by a single common need. That there must ever be a vast variety of needs, that needs are always changing, that consequently there is perpetual struggle in the world, a state of conflict which must be resolved by some method, whether or not of war, Novicov was unable to conceive. To this simple-minded pacifist humanity was a herd, whose business it was to maintain association throughout life, and human need seemed so simple that no question of conflict over its gratification could be contemplated. If humanity were indeed so simple a thing as this, if the needs of civilization were so primitive and elementary, no doubt war could be eliminated without any trouble (the only trouble would be to discover how it ever originated), but its absence would mean the absence of other things of far greater worth. It is probable that most of us sympathize with William James when, after describing a delightful week he had spent at one of the famous Chautauqua gatherings, he speaks of the relief with which he re-entered the savage and primitive atmosphere of the wicked world, with its everlasting conflict between the powers of light and the powers of darkness. 'In this unspeakable Chautauqua there was no potentiality of death in sight anywhere, and no point of the compass visible from which danger might possibly appear.'

So it comes about that while for the too abstract pedagogue like Bovet the nightshade may be all sublimated into the potato, for the thorough-going pacifist like Novicov all potatoes are nightshades, and for the thorough-going militarist like Moltke all nightshades are potatoes. In other words, war is regarded as the eternal and supreme type of conflict in the world, and for one side it is all good because it is conflict, and for the other all bad because it is war. On neither side can

we see the slightest recognition of that fundamental truth, built into the very foundations of life, of the universe itself, that conflict is a genus with many species, of which war is only one.

We are helped to realize this merely specific character of war when we remember that its peculiar trait is violence. Many various traits may mark the different forms of conflict, but violence, purposed and organized violence, remains the specific trait of war, according to the dictum of one of the greatest authorities, Clausewitz: 'War is an act of violence for the purpose of compelling the adversary to fulfil our will,' and he adds that with this object it equips itself with the inventions of the arts and sciences; while, long before Clausewitz, the classical definition of war, set forth by Cicero, was finally formulated by Grotius as a conflict by methods of violence, *certatio per vim*.

Thus to formulate war, to place it correctly in its classificatory position, is a direct aid to clear thinking. When we have done so, moreover, we realize that a method of which the essence is violence is alien to all those arts of living which, since the beginnings of civilization, we have been painfully striving to develop. Thus war, as a settlement of national conflicts, is for us to-day antiquated, just as the parallel, but earlier because more easily overcome, method of violence in the settlement of personal conflicts is antiquated. That is not to say that war has never had any beneficial influence at an earlier stage of civilization. Such a position would be untenable. We cannot escape from the fact that the slow process of civilization first emerges into the stage of history precisely at the point when the Bronze Age was passing into the Iron Age, at the point, that is to say, when it became possible to manufacture satisfactorily the deadly weapons demanded by war, the point where, as we are able to discern, war actually became acute and prominent in human affairs to a degree far beyond its previous small beginnings. The *Iliad*, the traditional record of a war which took place at this time, is the characteristic prelude to

European history. Why war should in that phase of man's history have been so associated with progress is a problem which remains unsolved. It cannot be said that it has yet been even seriously approached.<sup>1</sup> We may perhaps suppose, to fall back on the old analogy, that at that stage our belladonna plant had not evolved the full potency of its poison, so that the witchcraft of its mirage-producing drug action caused comparatively little evil. We are still, however, too near the beginning of history. It is only to-day, indeed, that we have discovered the existence of the magnificent Minoan Age, faintly reflected in Homer, which immediately preceded that beginning. We must be outside the phase of war to understand war intelligently, and as yet, it must be remembered, we are still in the Iron Age. It is even argued by some that the Great War has really been just a struggle between rival national combinations to secure the iron ores of Lorraine and the strip of French and Belgian ore-bearing land to the north.

Putting aside the partisans of war, it seems difficult to find advocates of violence in any department of life. One exception must be made. For those Syndicalists who accept M. Georges Sorel as their philosopher, violence, far from belonging to the archiepiscopal category of 'regrettable necessities,' is an essential and beneficial part of the world's order, exactly as for Moltke and the militarists. This disciple of Bergson, who has sometimes proved so disturbing to his fellow-disciples, piquantly combines a reverence for classic ideals and an almost puritanic moral asceticism with the adoration of violence. But he has extended the militarist's conception of violence. For Sorel the strike is a phenomenon of war, and nowadays the only promising kind of war, provided that it embodies the proletarian violence of class struggle, 'une chose très belle et très héroïque,' capable of saving the world from barbarism in the same way as, Sorel conceives, war saved the

<sup>1</sup> I may refer, however, to Holsti's helpful and too little known work, *The Relation of War to the Origin of the State*, published just before the Great European War.

world from barbarism in antiquity. This apology for violence stands alone, and we need scarcely attempt to weaken its force by inquiring how it is that a civilization so copiously aspersed with violence should still need more violence to redeem it.

Violence occupies an ever smaller part in our vision of the world. Even for pre-human eras we no longer invoke it. The catastrophic theory of geology has passed away, and even the discontinuous element in evolution has failed to fill any important place. Six days have long ceased to suffice for our picture of creation, and even six million years now go but a little way. The occasional emergence of a moment's violence is but a little thing in this vast sea. Yet the conflict of forces and the struggle of opposing wills are of the essence of our universe and alone hold it together.

It is with the notions of effort and resistance that we have formed our picture of the universe and that Darwin made intelligible the manner in which we ourselves came to be. It is on the like basis that our spiritual world rests. We create in art on the same plan and with the same materials as the world is created—making greater things, Keats said, than the Creator Himself made—and it is precisely in the most fundamental arts, in architecture and in dancing, that we find conflict and resistance most definitely embodied. Every pose of the dancer is the achievement of movement in which the maximum of conflicting muscular action is held in the most fluidly harmonious balance. Every soaring arch of the architect is maintained by an analogous balance of opposing thrusts, without which harmoniously maintained struggle his art, like the creator of the world's art, would collapse in ruins. For in the creation of the forms of art we see, as in the evolution of the forms of animal life, there is no room for violence; conflict and resistance go hand in hand with harmony and balance; we must go very low down in the arts—indeed, to the most degraded of all—to find that knock-out blow adored of the militarist.

It is not otherwise throughout the spiritual sphere in

which man's evolution moves. All the great achievements of mankind have slowly been reached and slowly extended by heroic effort and sustained struggle with earlier and outworn cultural achievements which had become less fit for human use. We vaguely divine, and sometimes even definitely trace, the superb struggles that thence arose, from the discovery of fire and the introduction of agriculture and the domestication of animals and the use of metals, onwards to the conquest over the air which we are but attaining, and the conquest over war which we have not even yet attained. Among more primitive peoples we see such cultural conflicts even to-day, and Dr. Rivers, who has so thoroughly studied them in Melanesia, concludes that in the contact and interaction of different cultures are furnished 'the starting-points of all the great movements in human history which we are accustomed to regard as Progress.'

Guizot, in his *History of European Civilization*, was probably correct in insisting that the hard fortune of Europe in toil and struggle, as compared with the smooth tranquillity of some other civilizations, was really Europe's good fortune. It is in such toils and struggles that the spirit of heroism is developed; war may give it scope—a fruitless scope which means less than nothing for human progress—but the tasks of civilization have created the stuff of it. It was in peace, not in war, that the heroes of to-day were nurtured. There is, indeed, no task of the muscles or of the brain in our ever-shifting civilization which may not be the training-ground for heroism and the field of its manifestations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is so even in the least material of the arts. Of a promising young English musical composer, George Butterworth, killed in France after a distinguished military career, it has been said: 'The same qualities which distinguished him as a soldier would undoubtedly have brought him deserved renown as a composer. Courage, patience, initiative, wide sympathies, high motives, and the instinct of genius for the essential, were all his.'

The passing of war, we see—if, indeed, we are to witness that passing—need leave us with no regrets. There is nothing that war has ever achieved we could not better achieve without it. If, indeed, it were not so, war would remain inexpugnably entrenched in the world, and

The world is cemented with blood and sweat; without pain and fortitude—that is to say, without struggle and conflict—there would have been no world at all. Thus it is that there is no standing-ground anywhere for the pacifist of the (in the strict sense) namby-pamby type, as little as there is for the militarist, since both alike support the delusion that, with the ending of war, struggle and heroism would vanish from earth.

its champions need not tremble. 'Man is above all an artist,' has lately written Élie Faure, who has himself been a champion of war. 'He only rejects those forms of art that are exhausted. The desire of perpetual peace will not kill this form of art unless the conditions of peace involve a new method of warfare, with the same sudden and collective intoxication, the same shining responsibilities, the same creative risks, the same atmosphere of voluntarily accepted tragedy.'

**N.B.**

The author of this  
day and book seems to  
be an anarchist or is  
about to turn crazy  
Because whatever he  
has said there in it is  
useless, trifling and  
all that make beyond our  
comprehension.

and not the man of know

## LUTHER

FOUR centuries have passed since on All Saints' Eve, the 31st October 1517, the Reverend Father Martin Luther set up on the gate of the great church at Wittenberg those 'Propositions' by which was initiated the most revolutionary act ever performed by any German. This incident, it is true, was but a part of an epoch-making series of deeds, and less important on the spiritual side than the moment, about a year later, when at last his rebellious indignation against the avenging 'justice' of God was finally settled by what Luther always believed to be the direct visitation of the Holy Spirit. That visitation came (there is no place closed to Divine revelation) to the privy in the tower of Wittenberg monastery, with the illumination 'The just shall live by faith,' and the gate of Paradise was opened *super cloacam*. It was the central event in Luther's inner life, but for the initiation of the mighty course of his external career the world has doubtless been right to select the publication of these Propositions, even though they were merely evoked by the extravagances of a Dominican indulgence-monger who is disowned by his own Church, and even though Luther himself was at times tempted to explain them away. That the centenary is being celebrated by Young Germany as joyously as it was in 1817 after the war of Liberation, under the inspiration of Father Jahn, 'the new Luther,' is improbable. But the occasion is still profitable for our own meditation. Luther has always been regarded as the central German. In the light of what we know to-day he may perhaps appear more typical than ever before. The study of this point is aided for many by the recent completion in an English version of the best and most impartial life of Luther yet published, a life written, strange as it may seem to some, by a scholarly Jesuit, Father Grisar; that is to say, by a

member of the famous company which led the Counter-Reformation.<sup>1</sup>

Luther, as befits a central and representative German, was born in the centre of Germany, a High Saxon of Thuringia. Thus he belonged south of the frontier line which cuts off the Low Germans of the north, with whom, on any reasonable anthropological theory, the English are closely related. He was not only separated from the Anglo-Saxons, but was racially apart from the other two great representative Germans: Bismarck to the east, standing for the special Prussian blend, and Goethe to the west, a Frank of the Rhine, and therefore predestined to cosmopolitanism.

It is usual to emphasize the plebeian origin and boorish temperament of 'the most eloquent and insolent peasant Germany has produced,' as Nietzsche terms Luther. He was a miner's son, and certainly there was nothing in his disposition which belies his birth. Yet too much may be made of it. Luther's great contemporary, Erasmus, who was born on the outskirts of Low Germany, though of higher was not really of much higher social origin; the illegitimate son of a priest, the grandson of a physician, he mixed at the outset in much the same kind of social circles. Yet two men could not be of more radically unlike temperament. It may be said that the sensitive refinement of Erasmus was the outcome of a fragile constitution, for we know how a strain of morbid delicacy, even in the lowest social classes, may separate its possessor by an abyss from healthier brothers and sisters. But Luther was highly neurotic, a much more pathological person than Erasmus.<sup>2</sup> We have to recognize that Luther's characteristics really were ingrained

<sup>1</sup> *Luther*, by Hartmann Grisar, S.J. Translated by E. M. Lamond. Six vols. (London: Kegan Paul, 1913-17). In justice to Father Grisar, it may be mentioned that the present essay is not largely founded on this biography, but mainly on Luther's own *Table Talk*.

<sup>2</sup> Luther's pathology has been studied by Küchenmeister and later by Ebstein. In youth he seems to have been healthy, and always remained robust. But he evidently had the uric acid diathesis in a pronounced form, and this led on to rheumatism, sciatica, gout, and stone, with frequent nephritic colic. He often refers to the trouble he suffered from constipation, which led to haemorrhoids, and the resulting losses of blood were an eagerly sought relief to his system. There

in his stock and fairly in harmony with the whole atmosphere of his environment. He was an adept in the culture of his land and day, eagerly devoted to literature, a poet, a good musician, accomplished in the mechanical uses of his hands, the intimate friend of Cranach, a skilful dialectician. While it is evident that he was withal, as it seems to us to-day, gross and plebeian, that was not a mere accident of birth, but of the essence of his representative character. 'My notion is that the Germans are simple, true, affectionate folk,' said Walt Whitman once to Edward Carpenter—and the observation is notable as coming from such a man—'but there is a kind of roughness, one may almost say brutishness, about them.' One sees this on a colossal scale in Luther, who would probably have laughed contemptuously at the ingenious explanation of Treitschke that roughness in a German is an affectation, like politeness in the people of other lands.

It is in accordance with this disposition that the flaming energy in the man was accompanied by the production of much smoke. Flame and smoke were important weapons in the spiritual warfare of this representative German. He was, above all, as he himself recognized, a rhetorician, not strong in logic. There is never any consistency in his opinions, even on the most vital subjects, as any one who has ever sought to ascertain his precise standpoint on some important question (as, for instance, marriage) cannot fail to discover. He was quite unable to pursue an argument on measured and rational lines. He proved but a blustering child in controversy with the calm and lucid Erasmus. Luther realized his defeat, but he found consolation in the field of invective, wherein he was easily a master, and henceforth 'my dear Erasmus' became that scorpion, that

was a tendency to melancholy, with attacks of giddiness, faintness, buzzing in the ears, hallucinations of sight and of hearing, as well as periods of prostration alternating with excitement, which sometimes made his friends fancy he must be afflicted with epilepsy or possessed by the Devil. All this is highly significant. We may bear it in mind, for instance, when we recall the circumstances under which Luther received his great revelation in the monastery tower.

bug, a mere hollow nut that fouls the mouth—yea, ‘the vilest miscreant that ever disgraced the earth.’ ‘Whenever I pray, I pray for a curse upon Erasmus.’ It is not surprising that Erasmus, who felt no need to retaliate in kind, again and again in his references to Luther uses the word ‘delirium.’ The turbulent flow of Luther’s arrogant invective, obscure and vague as it may often be, yet with the vital warmth of the blood in it, is indeed delirious in its astonishing wealth and energy. The most incompatible elements are brought together in this stream, humility and egoism, exalted abstraction and a superb naturalism in the use of gross or familiar imagery, scarcely before reached by the coarsest of medieval preachers, and doubtless the despair of all great preachers since. One cannot help being painfully affected, indeed, however remote one’s sympathies from Rome, by the dogmatic contempt, the unmeasured vituperation, which from the height of his personal infallibility as the special mouthpiece of God Luther flung on the whole Church. It was magnificent in its daring and its horror, alike for friend and foe, but it had in it neither justice nor mercy, not even ordinary humanity. Luther had lived for years in a monastery, some of his best and wisest friends were monks, he had exercised authority in the Church, and even when he began to rebel the Pope had dealt with him considerately. But Luther had little but evil to say of monks or friars except St. Bernard, and he was not altogether pleased even with St. Bernard; indeed, the whole Western Church ‘had had no excellent teacher but St. Augustine, and the Eastern Church but Athanasius—and he was nothing particular’; while Luther’s letter to Leo X (1520), in its reckless abuse under an air of condescending patronage, is the very perfection of insolence, the production, it seems, of a Teutonic Aretino. Strange as it may seem, on this and the like occasions Luther was altogether unaware of the spectacle he presented, and really imagined he was making an appeal to which a favourable response was possible. That this was so we may judge by a letter he wrote to Erasmus four years later. Erasmus was an old friend, now aged and infirm;

he was influential; it was Luther's part to be conciliatory—evidently he wished to be so. Yet the letter in which he makes the attempt is full of overbearing insults, of a spitefulness such as was once termed feminine, and it could cause nothing but resentment and alienation in the recipient.

Yet behind all this, and at times in the front of it, there is something homely, human, genial, almost lovable. If we ask how it should be so, we find the answer in the fact that this flow of passionate hatred and contempt is as little the outcome of disposition as of reason; it is a method, even a conscious method, of generating energy. 'I never work better,' he said, 'than when I am inspired by anger; when I am angry, I can write well, pray well, preach well. My whole temperament is quickened and my understanding sharpened; the vexations of the world and the temptations of the Devil depart from me.' His wrath, he said again, 'refreshed his blood,' and it was in the most extravagant outbursts of hatred that he felt most conscious of 'the presence of God.' Thus the great German's 'Hymns of Hate,' far from being the index of evil disposition, were simply a device comparable to that of the beast which instinctively lashes himself with his own tail in order to attain the degree of infuriation demanded by circumstances. It is a method which the German temperament, too phlegmatic to be easily moved to energetic action, especially requires, but, we must remember, the method is in more or less degree universal. We may see it during a great war in every belligerent country, not excluding one's own, whichever that may be. It is the distinction of Luther that, while he pushed the method to the extreme, he was entirely open with it. He was even prepared to admit what he called the 'honest and pious lie,' even 'a good stiff lie' ('ein gudte stargke Lugen'), provided it is for a good end. It was a point of view later recognized in Bismarck's statecraft.

Luther was a true German in his close combination, alike in speech and act, of the abstract with the realistic, of the emotional with the material. To some people the

German seems a creature of dreams and sentiment, of music and metaphysics. To others the German seems a creature of reckless materialism and crude fleshliness. Luther beautifully illustrates the fact that he is both. Here is all the sentiment, the simplicity, the enthusiasm for theological abstractions, and it is exhaled from a soil which for earthly coarseness can scarcely be matched in the history of genius. Let us note Luther's attitude in a test question, the feeling towards women. Probably no sixteenth-century German would come out well here, but surely none could equal this monkish reformer of the Christian world. For many years, he tells us, he never knew there was any sin but incontinence. Later he regarded a wife, whom he usually coupled with eating and drinking, as having her main function in relation to masculine incontinence. 'God has made that plaster for that sore.' Marry a wife, 'useful for the kitchen and the bedchamber,' he bade his followers; 'care not for rosy cheeks and white legs — you will find such in pictures.' For the rest, let a woman utilize her broad God-given hips in 'sitting at home.' She is a frail vessel, the silliest of God's creatures. The doctor then turned round and said: 'Let us talk of something else.'

One is constantly impressed by the expressive power of Luther's imagery, his plastic energy in moulding speech to emotional ends, the force with which even his casual sayings, pungent or poignant, cut to the core of experience. 'When I am assailed by tribulation, I rush out among my pigs rather than remain alone,' he said on one occasion at table. 'The human heart is like a millstone in a mill; put wheat under it, and it grinds the wheat to flour; put no wheat, and it still grinds on; but then 'tis itself it wears away.' Such utterances of vital human truth, embodied in vivid or homely metaphors, occur again and again in the *Table Talk*.<sup>1</sup>

Luther's rhetoric, indeed, however turbulent, however turbid, is no mere voice. It springs hot from a human

<sup>1</sup> 'The concentrated spirit of the sixteenth century,' this book is well termed by Dr. Preserved Smith (*Luther's Table Talk*, Columbia University Press, p. 87). It was highly popular in Germany, and had some influence on Goethe's *Faust*.

heart, itself as turbulent and as turbid. Luther's words and Luther's deeds are of a piece, alike human, violent, extravagant, the expression of a blindly impulsive force, the assertion of the most daring defiance the world had yet seen. Luther felt himself the child of God placed in a world under the direct rule of the Devil; what the exact relation of these two cosmic powers was he could never explain, but he felt himself the battlefield of their contest, and in the agony of this athletic struggle he has become one of the great spectacular figures of history. This Germanic temperament, we see, is made up of an incongruous mixture of gold and clay. But its great individualities moulded in the furnace of passion are devouring forces of Nature, and its ordinary common humanity, when hooped round in the lump by the iron bands of statecraft, becomes of an astonishing resistance.

The mighty effort of Luther changed the world. But that he had changed it into a better world was not so clear. It was not even clear, it is not clear to-day, what really the change was that he effected. The chief authorities are here hopelessly at variance. For Guizot he was the leader of a movement which abolished absolute power in the spiritual order, just as the English Revolution abolished power in the temporal order. For some he is simply the superb expression, in voice and deed, of the obscure seething movements beneath the surface of his time. For some he is the protagonist of modern democracy, or even of 'Kultur.' For some he is a gigantic belated figure thrust out from the Devil-haunted darkness of the Middle Ages and without any relation to his own world or ours. Even Harnack, the temperate theological representative of modern Germany, admits that Luther's Reformation delayed the political unity of Germany, brought on the Thirty Years' War, obscured the value of the Medieval and even the Early Church, and permanently fostered all the evils of religious schism. It is doubtful whether Father Grisar, who has devoted so many years to the elucidation of his life and work, has formed any conclusion as to what precisely Luther stands for. Luther himself, in the end,

seems to have been equally in the dark. As the close of his career drew nigh he was plunged into ever deeper hours of gloom. In such moments of spiritual darkness he might obscurely have felt that he had become an involuntary, and more tragic, Samson Agonistes. The whole world seemed to him to grow swiftly and steadily worse; its end, he asserted, could not be far off. He lost his self-confident arrogance. He realized that he was unable to control the forces he had unchained.<sup>1</sup> He saw himself struggling against great streams of tendency he had never set out to combat. The new stirrings of a social economic life he was unable to comprehend aroused his horror and hatred. On the one hand he would hang all rich farmers, such as nowadays would be termed 'profiteers,' but, on the other hand, he was pitiless towards the struggling peasantry, and heartily approved of serfdom. Shortly before his death a German princess, in fatuous compliment, wished him forty more years of life. 'I would rather,' he replied, 'throw away my hopes of Paradise.' He was mercifully spared that infliction. If he had lived forty years longer it would have been his fate to realize that the man who above all others had prepared the way for the purification and reinvigoration of the 'Antichrist of Rome and his greasy crew,' was that same Father Martin Luther who seemed to have dealt the Church so deadly a blow on All Saints' Eve, 1517.

<sup>1</sup> Janssen, in his instructive *History of the German People* (vol. xvi, p. 1), remarks that at the close of the Middle Ages religion and morality were at a low ebb in Germany, and that Luther's influence aggravated this condition of things.

## THE HUMAN BAUDELAIRE

THERE clings to the personality of Baudelaire, even to-day, a reputation that remains rather inhuman. The humanity of his work has, indeed, been slowly, very slowly, affirmed. It is but a small body of work, and even within its narrow limits unequal, often falling into rhetoric or banality; it has had to make its way to us amid all sorts of impediments: prosecution at the outset, its own novelty, the scandal of all respectably conventional readers, the embarrassed and imperfect comprehension of admirers from Gautier onwards. Only within recent years has it become clear to all that here a new revelation of the mysteries of human emotion was expressed, with a firm hand that possessed the sense of form, with a voice whose music could thrill the nerves and awaken the hidden impulses of the heart. Even in the midst of the agonies of war, we are told, in a little *cabinet de lecture* of the Latin Quarter with three copies of the *Fleurs du Mal*, they are never on the shelves, and the reader must put down his name weeks in advance. Yet if the poet has taken his place not only in the ranks of great writers, but among the classics of the heart, the man still remains homeless. For the most part, we search in vain among the documents that are left—his fragmentary notes and letters, his recorded sayings and doings, the recollections of his friends—for a human person to love. We find a rather neurotic individual, slightly unsound in heredity, who was predestined to live an extravagant, abnormal, in the worldly sense unsuccessful life. On that basis we have the record of perpetual reaction between extremes, of eccentricities that were merely childish, of a puerile delight in devices *pour épater le bourgeois* which the man of genius usually leaves to others. We seem to be in the presence of a mysterious and scarcely attractive figure, wearing a fantastic mask

to which he himself likes to attract attention. 'N'est-ce pas que je ressemble à un évêque damné?'

It is just fifty years since Baudelaire died. Therewith his books pass out of copyright, and the circle of his readers is indefinitely enlarged. It was a fitting moment for the publication of the long series of intimate letters, chiefly to his mother, and covering the years between the age of twelve and his death, thirty-four years later, which has been appearing in the *Revue de Paris*.<sup>1</sup> They are the revelation of a personality which it had been left to sensitive readers to divine beneath that mask of 'Wandering Jew' or 'Guillotiné' or 'Evêque damné' which Baudelaire loved to present to the world, and his dubious friends to point at. Here that personality is revealed clearly for all to see, even in pathetic nakedness, simple, human, pitiful.

It is, indeed, a pathetic, even a tragic figure guided through an atmosphere of unrelieved gloom by an inevitable Fate, whose life-course we follow in these letters. In the first letter of the series, a schoolboy of twelve, he writes to his brother of his laziness, 'a little mixed with *amour-propre*' (he could not write until receiving an answer to his former letter), a sprain of his foot, and his shame at having taken no prize. There we have, in effect, the four themes that were destined to be woven in and out of the whole drama: laziness, which was really a defect of physical energy combined with fidelity to a high ideal; pride which he could not shake off in the most intimate and even the most humiliating relationships; a feeble constitution; a personal inability to command worldly success. Throughout Baudelaire faces the facts of himself, without either disguise or emphasis, without either self-praise or self-palliation. At the most, he says, and that more than once: 'I have suffered so much, I have been so punished, I think I may be forgiven much.' His letters are written in a completely simple and un-literary manner; there is no style, nor always grammar. He is no longer the mischievous child hiding behind a mask, but still a child, indisciplined and awkward and

<sup>1</sup> Now (1918) published in a volume with some additions.

helpless, with dreams in his head and tears in his eyes, afraid of everything. He cannot go to see his mother on one occasion because his clothes are so shabby and he is afraid of the servants, so asks her to meet him in the *Salon Carré* at the *Louvre*, 'the place in Paris where one can talk best.' He knows, indeed, who he is and what he stands for in the world, though with no touch of vanity. 'I think that posterity concerns me,' he remarks parenthetically. And still his irritable pride comes in; after telling his mother that until she had sent him money he had been two days without food, and obliged to take some brandy offered to him, much as he hated spirits, he adds: 'May such confessions never be known to living soul or to posterity.'

The chief figures of this drama, after the protagonist, are three: *Maître Ancelle*, the lawyer who was constituted his guardian, after he had dissipated the greater part of the little fortune inherited from his father; his mistress, *Jeanne Duval*, the *Vénus Noire* (she had a strain of negro blood); and his mother, to whom most of the letters are addressed, the being who always remained the nearest to him in all the world. There are other subsidiary figures, notably his stepfather, *General Aupick*, successively French Ambassador in Constantinople, London, and Madrid, an honourable and good-hearted man who was prepared to be friendly and even helpful until he recognized that the young man's irritable pride made this impossible; and there is *Poulet-Malassis*, the admirable publisher and friend, whom we dimly see in the background. The guardian, the mistress, and the mother remain the three persons who had the deepest influence on Baudelaire's intimate personal life. *Ancelle* had the least, and there was no reason why he should have had any. He was only there because the poet had shown himself clearly unable to manage his own money affairs, and he seems to have been an excellent man, whose conduct was irreproachable. But Baudelaire, though aware of this, could never forgive him for being there at all. The fact that he must be treated as a child in money matters is a perpetual corroding poison to one of

Baudelaire's temperament, all the more so when there is no doubt about its necessity, and it recurs again and again in his letters to his mother, whom he begs repeatedly and with insistence to deal with him directly and not through Ancelle. He was never able to overcome the humiliation of this guardian.

Ancelle filled the chief place in the antechamber to Baudelaire's intimate life. Within, a more important figure, Jeanne, was associated with nearly the whole of his active years, from the age of twenty-one onwards. In one of his letters Baudelaire mentioned that he could not get on with his brother on account of the latter's 'attitude of cynicism towards women.' How little there was of the cynic in Baudelaire could not be better illustrated than by the long story of his devotion to Jeanne, for there could not well be a woman better fitted to stimulate the germs of cynicism than Jeanne. When what beauty she possessed faded, and she became a prematurely aged invalid, no charm was left; she was stupid, false, and spiteful; she took all the money he could gather together for her, and trickily tried to get more; she treated him with insolent contempt, and seemed to delight in humiliating him; she went to his publisher to try to sell books and drawings he had given her; she made him ridiculous by declaring that the money he had sent to pay for her in a nursing-home had never been handed over; she showed neither regard nor admiration for him; she felt no interest in his work, and would not trouble to acquire any. Baudelaire soon ceased to have any delusions about Jeanne; at first, as he admitted, he was guilty of outbursts of violence, but before long, while recognizing good qualities we can no longer discern, he realized her character, with the same courageous insight with which he realized his own. And this, as he writes to his mother, was the woman on whom he had, like a gamester, placed all his chances; 'this woman was my only distraction, my only pleasure, my only comrade.' So she continued to be, such as she was, many years after. Undoubtedly he was upheld by the deep-rooted pride which he himself recognized as the chief element in his

character. Nothing would induce him to abandon Jeanne to misery. For twenty years he worked for her, cared for her, nursed her, scarcely as a lover—though on one occasion, when she threatened to leave him, he was ill for days—but rather with the unrewarded devotion of a Sister of Mercy.

Of Baudelaire's mother, Madame Aupick, no picture is presented to us. He analyses Jeanne's character, he analyses his own, but never his mother's. Yet we obtain many glimpses which enable us to form a fairly clear idea. She had been, we gather, a beautiful woman of distinguished appearance; she was also of neurotic tendency, subject to migraine and other nervous disturbances, so that her son shows a constant solicitude about her health. In this matter of temperament, as he himself remarks, he takes after her. But on the mental side there seems a total absence of likeness between the Ambassador's wife and the Bohemian poet who spent his life wandering from one third-rate hotel to another in the Latin Quarter. She was conventional, she was devout, her literary tastes were of the most ordinary kind. She was indulgent; her son is able to write simply and frankly to her about Jeanne, and no doubt she felt some blind sort of maternal pride in his reputation. He is constantly sending her his articles or specially bound volumes of his works; but, though she is evidently interested in the Poe translations, to her son's genius she seems almost as insensitive as Jeanne. The devotion which subsisted to the end on both sides, notwithstanding the perpetual wounds which each was inevitably receiving from the other, is all the more wonderful and pitiful. The son's letters are throughout the letters of a child, who sometimes implores his mother ('avec des mains jointes,' as he says) and sometimes attempts to domineer over her. He comes to her with all his troubles, quite humbly, throwing aside, if not without an effort, all his *amour-propre*. It is seldom that we miss a reference to his 'eternal money worries.' He is always wanting to borrow money, large sums or small sums—even, at desperate moments, a few francs. But we never feel that he is herein unworthily trying to

exploit his mother; his attitude is too simple and child-like, his tone too poignantly heart-felt. He writes to her, as he says, 'not only as my mother, but as the one being who loves me.' He is often hopeful; all his literary affairs are going well, and he has just had an article accepted by an editor; but—needless to quote further, for any one who has ever been acquainted with a young author is familiar with such situations. In a month, a fortnight perhaps, he will be rich, but, with only thirty francs in his pocket, how about the interval? Again and again he declares that 'before New Year's Day I shall have settled some of my debts and published my verses'; but on one occasion, turning on himself with sarcasm, he adds: 'I shall soon know that phrase by heart.' For these anxieties—'unhappy, humiliated, sad as I am, overwhelmed every day by a crowd of wants'—were not favourable to productive activity, especially to one of Baudelaire's make, 'a creature made of idleness and violence,' whose cerebral activity so far outruns his nervous vitality. He realizes this himself—no one was ever more clear-sighted—and writes to his mother that 'the absolute idleness of my apparent life, contrasted with the perpetual activity of my ideas, throws me into rages.' He feels that he has wasted twenty years of his life in dreaming. 'Habit plays such a large part in virtue,' he writes, and goes on to speak with humble respect of Balzac, who '*always worked*.' And again, a few years later, he writes: 'How many years of fatigue and punishment it takes to learn the simple truth that work, that disagreeable thing, is the only way of not suffering in life, or at all events of suffering less.'

On his mother's side we seem to discern, with whatever lack of sympathy and constant reproaches, a patient and adorable affection which no disappointments could permanently crush. The Ambassador's wife seems from time to time to make futile efforts to bring the child of genius into the ordinary paths of respectability. She realized that an excess of generosity was useless, but though her funds were not unlimited, the advances she made evidently amounted altogether to a large sum.

Baudelaire soothed his pride over these transactions by a sanguine faith in the future and a quiet confidence in the ultimate recognition of his genius. He was never to see the realization of that faith and that confidence. In March 1866, he took Poulet-Malassis and Félicien Rops to see his favourite church at Namur, St. Loup, built in the finest baroque style of the Jesuits, with red marble pillars, solemnly fantastic in the dark and heavy atmosphere, the *Fleurs du Mal* transmuted into stone, a spot to which, for Baudelaire's sake, one went on pilgrimage in days before the war. Here he fell stricken by paralysis. By his mother's wish they conveyed him to the Paris he had abandoned three years earlier for the still less congenial Brussels. His memory grew faint and uncertain; the great master of language could command few words beyond 'Nom, cré nom!' But he still loved to hear Wagner's music; he still delighted in the sight of tulips and dahlias; he still liked to appear neat and elegant. A few months after the first stroke he died in the arms of his mother, who cherished the belief that he recognized her to the end.

The rich genius of France has not been rich in poets. To the French critic, indeed, it has seemed that France has sometimes been a 'nest of singing birds.' But from the tangled forest of English literature where 'that wild music burthens every bough' we are not much impressed by the French critic's nest. It even seems to us that those special qualities of the French genius which have produced magnificent results in so many fields—the daring logic, the cool penetrative analysis, even the instinct for art—are with difficulty compatible with what we understand as poetry, for in France the rhetorician, with eternal recurrence, takes the poet's place, and no man marks the difference. The clarity and order and sociality of the French Latin genius weave a close harmonious network against which the poet, with his disorganizing lyric passion, can only beat himself to death. In the island where, as it has been said, 'every Englishman is himself an island,' the poet is as independent as the rest, but as free in his spare moments to earn his

living, more or less creditably, as custom-house officer, clergyman, apothecary, or what not. In France, on the other hand, whose great poets may easily be counted off on the fingers of one hand, from Villon to Verlaine, the poet has been a tragic victim, an outcast even to those who recognized his genius. Ronsard, in the small group of great poets, is the exception, and when we wander from Tours down the left bank of the Loire to that little priory farmstead, delightful even in its decay, which was Ronsard's home, we realize the secret of his serenity and tender joy, and how it was that he is, after all, the least of the great poets of France. For we understand nowhere better than in France that Nature made the heart in the form of a lyre and stretched across it cords of tendinous flesh. How significantly true it is in Baudelaire's case has now been made for ever clear by the revelation of these letters.

## RODO

A FEW months ago José Enrique Rodó died in Palermo on his way from South America to France.<sup>1</sup> This statement probably conveys no meaning, and it may even be that it is here made for the first time in England. We live, still with a certain degree of safety, in a remote island wrapped round by northern mists which deaden all the rumours of the world, and its finer voices only penetrate to us, if at all, from afar, slowly and with difficulty. South America we associate with various miscellaneous things, perhaps mostly unpleasant. We seldom think of it—even if we happen to have been there—as a land of poets and artists and critics. So it can scarcely be surprising that few among us know so much as the name of South America's best writer, who was also the best writer anywhere in the Castilian speech, and one of the most distinguished spirits of our time.

Our ignorance may seem the more ungracious if we learn that Rodó's most remarkable essay—his whole work may be said to be comprehended in some half-dozen long essays—is called *Ariel*.<sup>2</sup> This sensitive and exalted thinker, familiar with the finest culture of Europe, found the symbol of his aspirations for the world in the English poet's *Tempest*. *Ariel* is the long monologue (extending to a hundred pages) of a teacher who once more gathers his old disciples around him in his study, dominated by a bronze statue of the Shakespearian spirit of the air at the moment when Prospero gives him his freedom. 'Ariel symbolizes the rule of reason and of feeling, generous enthusiasm, high and disinterested motives for action, the spirituality of culture, the vivacity and grace of intelligence, the ideal goal to which human selection tends, eliminating with the patient chisel of life the tenacious vestiges of Caliban, symbol of sensuality and torpor.'

<sup>1</sup> This was written in the autumn of 1917.

<sup>2</sup> José Enrique Rodó: *Cinco Ensayos*. Madrid, 1915.

Prospero—for so his disciples have named him—discourses on the art of living. For Rodó believed with Shaftesbury that 'virtue is a kind of art, a divine art,' and the moral law 'an aesthetics of conduct.' To live in the finest sense is to exercise a free creative activity which passes beyond interested and material ends, to cultivate the leisure of the interior life, and from that centre to organize the beauty and harmony of society. To enforce this point of view, Rodó analyses at length, beneath the mask of Prospero, the spirit of the civilization of the United States. He refrains from insinuating—such a suggestion would be alien to his gracious and sympathetic attitude—that this spirit is symbolized by Caliban. He admires, though he is unable to love or altogether to approve, the spirit of North America, and his penetrating analysis never even remotely verges on harshness or scorn. He distinctly believes, however, that the utilitarian conception of human destiny and equality in mediocrity as the social rule constitute in their intimate combination the spirit of Americanism. If it can be said that Utilitarianism is the Word of the English spirit, then the United States is the Word made flesh. Rodó by no means implies that the same spirit may not be found also in South America. On the contrary, he declares that there is in the South an increasing Nordomania, but he regards it as opposed to the genius of Latin America, a mere artificial 'snobisme' in the political sphere. It is necessary, even for the sake of America as a whole, that Latin America should jealously guard the original character of its collective personality, for nearly all luminous and fruitful epochs of history have been, as in Greece with the poles of Athens and Sparta, the result of two distinct correlated forces; the preservation of the original duality of America, while maintaining a genial and emulatory difference, at the same time favours concord and solidarity.

'In the beginning was action.' In those words which Goethe put into his history of *Faust*, Rodó remarks, the historian might begin the history of the North American Republic. Its genius is that of force in movement.

Will is the chisel which has carved this people out of hard stone and given it a character of originality and daring. It possesses an insatiable aspiration to cultivate all human activities, to model the torso of an athlete for the heart of a freeman. The indiscriminating efforts of its virile energy, even in the material sphere, are saved from vulgarity by a certain epic grandeur.

Yet, asks Rodó, can this powerful nation be said to be realizing, even tending to realize, the legitimate demands, moral, intellectual, and spiritual, of our civilization? Is this feverish restlessness, centupling the movement and intensity of life, expended on objects that are truly worth while? Can we find in this land even an approximate image of the perfect city?

North American life seems, indeed, to Rodó, to proceed in that vicious circle which Pascal described as the course of the pursuit of well-being which has no end outside itself. Its titanic energy of material aggrandizement produces a singular impression of insufficiency and vacuity. This people has not known how to replace the inspiring idealism of the past by a high and disinterested conception of the future, and so lives only in the immediate reality of the present. The genial positivism of England, it seemed to Rodó, has here been deprived of that idealism which was a deep source of sensibility beneath the rough utilitarian surface of the English spirit, ready to gush forth in a limpid stream when the art of a Moses struck the rock. English aristocratic institutions, however politically unjust and out of date, set up a bulwark to vulgar mercantilism which the American Republic removed, but left unplaced. So it is that we find in the United States a radical inaptitude for selection, a general disorder of the ideal faculties, a total failure to realize the supreme spiritual importance of leisure. They have attained the satisfaction of their vanity of material magnificence, but they have not acquired the tone of fine taste. They pronounce with solemn and emphatic accent the word 'art,' but they have not been able to conceive that divine activity, for their febrile sensationalism excludes its noble serenity.

Neither the idealism of beauty nor the idealism of truth arouses their passion, and their war against ignorance results in a general semi-culture combined with languor of high culture. Nature has not granted them the genius for propaganda by beauty or for apostolic vocation by the attraction of love. Bartholdi's statue of Liberty over New York awakens no such emotion of religious veneration as the ancient traveller felt when he saw emerge from the diaphanous nights of Attica the gleam of Athene's golden spear on the height of the Acropolis.

Just as in the main this analysis may be, it will occur to some readers that Rodó has perhaps attributed too fixed a character to North American civilization, and has hardly taken into adequate account those germs of recent expansion which may well bring the future development of the United States nearer to his ideals. It must be admitted, indeed, that if he had lived a few months longer Rodó might have seen confirmation in the swift thoroughness, even exceeding that of England, with which the United States on entering the war sought to suppress that toleration for freedom of thought and speech which he counted so precious, shouting with characteristic energy the battle-cry of all the belligerents, 'Hush! don't think, only feel and act!' with a pathetic faith that the affectation of external uniformity means inward cohesion—a method of 'self-inflicted camouflage,' as Professor Dewey has termed it in a discussion of the 'Conscription of Thought' which Rodó might have inspired. Still, Rodó himself recognized that, even as already manifested, the work of the United States is not entirely lost for what he would call 'the interests of the soul.' It has been said that the mercantilism of the Italian Republics paid the expenses of the Renaissance, that the spices and ivory of Lorenzo de' Medici renewed the *Symposia* of Plato. There is in civilization a transformation of force, by which the material becomes the spiritual, and provided that process is carried through, it seemed to Rodó, the North American Republic will escape the fate of Nineveh and Sidon and Carthage. *Ariel* is for Rodó the ultimate outcome of that process,

the instinct of perfectibility, the ascension of the organized forms of Nature into the flaming sphere of spirit.

It will be seen that, alike in his criticism of life and his criteria of progress, Rodó remains essentially democratic. He is altogether out of sympathy with the anti-democratic conception of life often associated with Nietzsche's doctrine of the Super-man. He waved politely aside the affirmation of Bourget that the triumph of democracy would mean the defeat of civilization, and greatly as he admired the genius of Renan, he refused to believe that a concern for ideal interests is opposed to the democratic spirit; such belief, indeed, would be the condemnation of Latin America as much as of Anglo-Saxon America. Rodó accepts democracy, but on that basis he insists on the need for selection. Even in Nature, he remarks, among flowers and insects and birds and onwards, we see natural selection favouring superiority and ensuring the triumph of beauty. It is not the destruction but the education of democracy which is needed in order to further this process of natural selection. Rodó held that it is the duty of the State to render possible the uniform revelation of human superiorities, wherever they exist. 'Democratic equality is the most efficacious instrument of spiritual selection.' Democracy alone can conciliate equality at the outset with an inequality at the end which gives full scope for the best and most apt to work towards the good of the whole. So considered, democracy becomes a struggle, not to reduce all to the lowest common level, but to raise all towards the highest degree of possible culture. Democracy in this sense retains within itself an imprescriptible element of aristocracy, which lies in establishing the superiority of the best with the consent of all; but on this basis it becomes essential that the qualities regarded as superior are really the best, and not merely qualities immobilized in a special class or caste and protected by special privileges. The only aristocracy possible on a democratic basis is one of morality and culture. Superiority in the hierarchical order must be superiority in the capacity to love. That truth, Rodó declares, will remain rooted in human belief

'so long as it is possible to arrange two pieces of wood in the form of a cross.'

In *Ariel* Rodó never directly brings South America on to the scene. He would gladly, one divines, claim for his own continent the privilege of representing *Ariel*. But he realized that much remained to do before that became possible. His love for his own country is embodied in three of his finest and latest essays, concerned with the three noblest figures of South America in different fields. In the first of these he deals with the greatest figure of South America in the sphere of actions, Bolívar, 'the South American Napoleon.' In the second he discusses attractively the life and environment of Juan Montalvo, the greatest prose-writer of South America, with whose name Rodó's is now associated. In the third he shows all his delicate critical discrimination in estimating the work of Rubén Darío, who was, as Rodó points out, not so much the greatest poet of South America as of contemporary Spain, an imaginative figure of world-wide interest. In these essays Rodó is revealed as the unfailingly calm and lucid critic, discriminating and sympathetic, possessed of a style which, with its peculiar personal impress of combined gravity and grace, rendered him, in the opinions of good Spanish judges, the greatest contemporary master of the Castilian tongue.

That Rodó realized how far the finer spirits of South America yet are from completely moulding their own land to their ideals we may gather from various episodes of his work. He was not able to regard South America, any more than North America, as to-day a congenial soil for art. If he disliked the intolerant spirit of utilitarian materialism in the North, he equally opposed the intolerance of Jacobinism in the South. This is brought out in an admirable series of letters, entitled *Liberalismo y Jacobinismo*, suggested by the action of the Charity Commissioners in removing all images of the Crucified Christ from the walls of hospitals, suppressing them, not as objects of worship (for that had already been done), but even as symbols. Rodó criticizes this action, not from the point of view of Christianity which is not his,

but from that of a sympathetic and tolerant Liberalism, to which he opposes the spirit of Jacobinism. By Jacobinism he means, in fair agreement with Taine, a mental attitude of absolute dogmatism, necessarily implying intolerance, on the basis of rationalistic free-thought. Flaubert's *Homais* is its immortal embodiment. Rodó admirably analyses this attitude, and shows how, with all its clear logical thoroughness, it is out of touch with the complexities of life and lacks the sense for human realities. Rodó sees that true free-thought, far from being a mere rigid formula, is the result of an interior education which few can acquire. The attainment of toleration, of spiritual toleration, he regards as the great task of the past century—an affirmative and active toleration, 'the great school of largeness in thought, of delicacy in sensibility, of perfectibility in character.' He foresaw, even before the war, that there are troublous times ahead for freedom, but he saw, also, that even if but one soul should stand firm, there will be the palladium of human liberty.

Rodó was of the tribe of Quinet and Renan, of Fouillée and especially Guyau. Like those fine spirits, he desired to be the messenger of sweetness and of light, of the spirit of Jesus combined with the spirit of Athens, and the intolerance of rationalism seemed to him as deadly a poison to civilization as that of Christianity. In his steady devotion to this combined ideal Rodó may be said to be European, and more distinctively French. But in his adaptation of that ideal to the needs of his own land, and his firm establishment of it on a democratic basis, he is the representative of South America. It was his final hope that out of the agony of this war there would emerge new ideals of life, new aspirations of art, in which Latin America, stirred by the world-wide shock, would definitely affirm its own conscious personality.

Rodó was a Uruguayan, of old and wealthy family, born forty-five years ago in Montevideo, where he spent nearly the whole of his life. On leaving the University of his native city, where in later years he himself lectured

on literature, his activities found some scope in journalism, and he was interested in politics, being at one time a Deputy in the Uruguayan Chamber. The mood of his earliest writings is one of doubt, anxiety, scepticism; he seems to be in expectation of some external revelation or revolution. But his own personal vision became gradually established. His revelation was not from without, but from within. He attained a rare serenity and lucidity; and he remained always indifferent to applause. Indeed, amid the declamatory and impulsive extravagance which often marks the South American, it seemed to some that his attitude was the outcome of a temperament almost too calm and reasonable, and they recalled that neither in youth or later had he ever been known to be in love. But Rodó's spirit was as large-hearted and sympathetic as it was penetrative and keen. When he died, in Sicily, suddenly and alone, on his way at last to visit the land of France which he regarded as his intellectual home, he was exercising, it is said, a tranquil kind of spiritual royalty over the whole South American continent. Henceforth his slender and very tall figure will no longer be seen striding rapidly through the streets of his native city, as his friend and fellow-countryman Barbagelata has described it, one arm swinging like an oar, and lifted aquiline face that recalled a condor of the Andes.

## THE FUNCTION OF TABOOS

WHEN people talk nowadays of the social aspects of modern life, and especially of its sexual aspects, they are sure to refer to what they call the disappearance of taboos. They proceed to enumerate a number of things which in our society were formerly forbidden (and presumably not done) and now are not forbidden, together with a corresponding list of things which were formerly prescribed (and presumably carried out) but now are regarded as unnecessary, indifferent, or even undesirable, to use no stronger term.

It seems possible to any one whose memory goes back for half a century that these people may be justified in their statements, and as one who has sometimes been execrated or eulogized for playing a part in the change I have no wish to deny its existence. It even seems to me that the time has come for taking a broad view of this change. I think I am competent to take that view, for my attitude is really impartial, since if, on the one hand, I have done my best to destroy some taboos, on the other, I not only have a firm faith in taboos but I regard them as absolutely an indestructible element of social life, and not of human life alone.

A taboo, speaking roughly, simply indicates something that is 'not done.'<sup>1</sup> The reason why it is not done may be, and often is, unknown to those who observe the taboo. So that all sorts of reasons—often very unreasonable reasons—are invented to explain the taboo. But below the surface there always are reasons for taboos. Among wild birds in a special phase of bird-existence it is taboo to remain close to human beings. That taboo

<sup>1</sup> See article 'Tabu' by R. R. Marett in Hastings's *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*. 'Taboo' was a word first met with by Captain Cook at the island of Tonga in 1770, as meaning 'things not to be touched,' though Cook clearly understood and expressed the more comprehensive meanings of the term, and that it was both spiritual and temporal in its nature and effects.

is strictly analogous to human taboos; it is an adopted custom. It is not found everywhere among birds. When men first visit virgin islands of the southern seas there are birds who do not regard human beings as taboo. The taboo is introduced later when human beings have become destructive to the bird society. It is, of course, completely unnecessary to be aware of the reason for the taboo, and if birds ever acquired speculative minds they would invent reasons. That is, as we know, exactly what human societies do. The distinction of human taboos lies largely in their high imaginativeness, alike as regards their nature and the supposed reasons assigned for them, and in the comparative swiftness with which they may change.

Yet taboos remain as essential in human life as in life generally. They are a part of tradition, and it is difficult to say that tradition, though always growing and changing, is anywhere non-existent or that life would be possible without it. Among lower forms of life we commonly talk of an adaptation to the environment. The adoption of a taboo, whether or not by modifying it, is exactly such an adaptation to the environment, in accordance with tradition. In the British Isles it is usually taboo for men and women to go about naked. But it is not invariably so. In the seventeenth century, as Fynes Moryson testifies, high-born ladies could go about naked in some districts of Ireland, and, as Pepys testifies, occasional eccentric individuals could do so even in the streets of London. It is quite likely that this taboo will shift again—it is indeed already beginning to do so—and become less stringent. Taboos are constantly liable to shift backwards and forwards over the threshold between prohibition and permission. We witness similar shifting taboos in Nature, and it might not be too fanciful to trace them even in the plant world. We are often so obsessed by our own modes of activity that we fail to realize that we are, after all, a part of Nature and that the same movements which occur in us also occur, however widely different the forms, in other vital phenomena. Unthinking people sometimes talk as though taboos

were effete relics of the past which it is in our power to cast away altogether. A little reflection might serve to show not only that they are far too numerous and too deeply rooted to be torn up at will but that we should be in a sad case without them, indeed that human society could not survive their loss. It is certain that property—which from Neolithic times and no doubt earlier has been an important element of human society—could not exist without the taboo against stealing. Law and the police struggle against the violations of that taboo; but they do so very ineffectually; they could not do it at all in the absence of the taboo, for we all of us every day possess the opportunity to steal. Among savages nearly everywhere it is taboo which binds the members of the clan together and ensures that they shall behave one to another in a decently social manner.<sup>1</sup> We have lost the word but we have the bond under other names. To-day, a distinguished English lawyer, Lord Buckmaster, calls it 'social opinion.' He is strongly opposed to capital punishment and to any form of vengeance wreaked on the criminal. 'It is my belief,' he said, giving evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons (26 March 1930), 'that the real deterrent against crime is social opinion. It is not the police nor the laws. It is the healthy public opinion which affects and surrounds a man from his youth.' In other words, it is the existence of taboos.

It is indeed only the existence of such taboos which enables us to possess any sacredness of personality at all. It is taboos that preserve our more refined sensibilities from the people who wipe their mouths with the table-cloth and blow their noses on the serviette, and it is

<sup>1</sup> The word 'savagery,' now that we know more about savages, is losing its old meaning. For the most part, as Dr. Haddon, who has known them well, remarks, 'savages are gentlemen.' Among the Papuans, K. E. Williams, who has specially studied their moral code (*Orokaiva Society*, chap. xviii, 1930), finds no supernatural sanction of morality; the fear of hurting the feelings of one's fellow-men is the real 'moral sanction,' though it is associated with, as minor motives, the fear of retaliation and, still more, the fear of public reprobation. Williams terms it 'the sympathetic sanction,' as it involves a constant consideration for all the members of one's 'sympathy-group.'

taboos that preserve us from being murdered outright. If we were objects of complete indifference to our fellows, or of no more concern than stones or trees, we should soon be driven up to or over the verge of suicide. Life is livable because we know that wherever we go most of the people we meet will be restrained in their actions towards us by an almost instinctive network of taboos. We know that they will allow us the same or nearly the same degree of freedom and privilege that they claim for themselves; if we take our place in a queue at a railway station or a theatre they will not thrust themselves in front of us; if we claim a seat by placing our suitcase on it they will not fling the article aside and place themselves there; if they desire to perform any of the intimate natural excretory functions which are commonly regarded as disgusting they will not spontaneously do it before our faces; if—to come to the sphere with which taboos are to-day for most persons specially associated—they chance to experience an impulse of sexual attraction they will not lay lustful hands on us but either conceal their feeling or strive to find delicate methods of expressing it. No published laws and regulations—even when such exist—are needed to restrain them. They are held back by almost instinctive taboos.

The pronounced growth of a new taboo in a whole nation is seen in the change of attitude towards drunkenness which has taken place in England during the lifetime of those past middle age, and is clearly demonstrated alike by the statistics of the consumption of alcohol and police-court convictions for drunkenness. Among the upper classes drunkenness had disappeared as a prominent social phenomenon at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was in the previous century that a great statesman like Pitt could openly relieve himself of the results of excessive drink by going behind the Speaker's chair in Parliament to vomit, and that men of good society after dinner, when the ladies had retired, could drink port till they fell beneath the table. But such scenes among the populace in the streets of that century, as depicted by Hogarth, were much slower to

pass away. Within living memory, however, there has been a great change in this respect among the lower social classes, and those of us who knew London fifty years ago can bear witness to the frequency of the signs of drunkenness then compared with their rarity now. The change is reflected in police-court convictions for drunkenness; comparing even so recent a year as 1905 with 1928, there was a drop of seventy-three per cent in the convictions during those twenty-three years. To some extent the change is due to diminished facilities for obtaining drink and its higher price. But the young man of to-day has a new social ideal; he does not want to spend his evenings in a public-house, like the men of an elder generation now dying out; 'he puts on a nice suit of clothes,' as an ex-Chief Constable of Police remarks, 'and nicely cleaned boots, with the other accessories of a tidy turn-out, and takes his young lady to cinema, dance, or wherever fancy may lead them; she is smartly dressed, and he has to live up to her standard. The shillings that used to go in drink are saved up for clothes and to spend on amusements; and the young man is so far different from his predecessor of another generation that he has acquired the necessary amount of self-respect to feel it a disgrace to be seen drunk.' In other words, a new taboo has come into existence.

Such taboos are typical in our own society, and are cherished even by the person who professes the strongest contempt for taboos, if he is a fairly normal member of our society. We may even say that he is—whether or not he knows it—actually engaged in increasing and strengthening them. The whole tendency of our society to-day is to increase and strengthen the taboos which preserve the freedom and enlarge the activities of the individual in moving about in a civilized environment. Several even of those taboos which I have just mentioned as to-day 'almost instinctive' had little or no force half a century ago; I myself can recall the time when some of them had not come into being, or were not commonly recognized, and I can therefore realize the benefits they confer. There is no doubt that the growth of urban life

and the associated collectivistic activities which are for the benefit of all, but belong to no individual, demand for their full enjoyment a system of taboos, either automatic or self-imposed by an effort of discipline. It is only so that the municipal organization of books and pictures and music and gardens and fountains becomes possible with all the privileges and the conveniences of urban life. The individual in whom the taboos necessary for such organization are not either automatic or self-imposed is an anti-social individual, and his elimination would be for our benefit. For while some of the taboos in question are objectified in rules and regulations with penalties for their violation, many could not be carried out by force, even with an army of officials, unless supported by the general taboo-observance of the community.

The recognition of the permanence of the taboo-observing impulse, and the constant tendency to develop new taboos, may enable us to face with calmness the counterbalancing fact of the falling away of taboos which have served their purpose and are no longer needed under changed social conditions. That is a process always going on, and in some spheres it has during recent years moved with unusual rapidity. The reality of the changes that have thus taken place, whether they are to be approved or condemned, we may thus all accept. As often happens, it is small things—small yet significant—which enable us to grasp the reality of change. When we read Pepys's *Diary* it is the minute points which fascinate us, for they enable us to realize profound differences in the attitude of seventeenth - century people compared with our own; as when Pepys found lice in a strange bed he slept in, 'which made us merry.' I always recall as significant the first occasion on which I observed a young woman in a London street pausing a moment to adjust her stocking without embarrassment and without going a step out of her way. I had been brought up in the Victorian period when if a woman even of the poorest class (though, for the matter of that, it is women of low social class who are most prudish) wished to pull up her stocking she retired into the darkest alley she could find

with her face to the wall. The difference is typical of a revolutionary change in the whole attitude of women.

That was war-time, and the Great War undoubtedly had its influence in the movement we are here considering, not indeed by generating but by accelerating it. All the social changes which were witnessed during the war in the belligerent countries would have taken place without it. But they would have taken place more gradually and unevenly, not in so dramatic and spectacular a shape.

The whole series of changes so far as women have been concerned—and it is in connection with women that the violated taboos have caused most uproar—were the outcome of a single movement: the movement for making women the companions of men. They were not that in medieval theory; woman for that theory was either above man or below him; as Miss Eileen Power remarks, she was Janus-faced: in one of her aspects she was Mary, the mother of God and saviour of men, in the other Eve, the seducer of man and the cause of all his woe. By the nineteenth century this theory had become reduced to an empty shell of convention, but it still retained influence, even though within the shell new conceptions were germinating and causing it to crack.

The woman moulded according to these new conceptions is no longer the angel-devil which her predecessor seemed to imaginative eyes, but obviously made to be—as witnessed even by her hair and her skirts and the simple fashion of her garments—the social equal and companion of man, whether in work or play, even perhaps the play of sex.

That has meant the falling away not only of deliberately broken taboos but also of a greater number that have disappeared almost unconsciously and automatically. The girl who without thought stopped in the middle of the pavement to adjust her stocking was the typical pioneering figure. She was introducing a new kind of simple directness into life, a new sort of modesty, a new courage. Naturally it is in the sphere of sexual emotions and habits that these attributes become most conspicuous, for men and even more for women, whose sphere

is by constitution so largely that of sex, whether for good or evil. The new freedom and directness are obviously shown in public speech and the world of journalism. In private speech, of course, things have always been spoken of—often ignorantly and unwholesomely and seldom between people of opposite sex even when married to each other—which were regarded as indecorous to speak of in public, even when they were of most vital concern to society. Venereal disease is such a subject. It concerns every one, because, however austere the individual may live, he or she is always liable to come into contact with a venereally affected person or even to enter into lifelong relationship with such a person, and so to risk the prospects of health and happiness. Yet all of us who are past youth once lived in a time when the taboo on discussion was so strict that only in professional or highly specialized quarters was it possible to discuss frankly the issues of venereal disease, and such a word as 'syphilis'—which is merely the simple and correct name for the most potently dangerous venereal disease—was for public purposes prohibited. Even to-day, so strong has been the hold of the old taboo, we find a tendency to disguise these subjects under the vague and fumbling name of 'social hygiene,' although that term, so far as it has any meaning at all, has no special connection with the subject in question.

The necessity for plain speaking about venereal disease, now universally admitted, was first felt as a gradual extension of that great organized movement for 'Public Health' which we owe to the enthusiasm for material progress of the so-called 'Victorian' epoch. It was inevitable that an important aspect of public health should soon be felt to lie in the spread of information to young people concerning the exact nature of the danger of venereal diseases. Thus was reached the idea of a sort of 'sexual education.' But it was obvious that an education in sex which merely meant the imparting of information necessary as a warning against disease was absurdly inadequate and might even sometimes prove mischievous. There thus came into view, not indeed

for the first time, but in a more urgent and generally acceptable fashion, the whole question of education in matters of sex. This is now being more or less systematically carried out in all countries. In Russia it may be found here and there developed with relentless thoroughness and with the aid of the cinema to illustrate the various actual phases of the sex life. In Germany also, which has long been a centre of sexological science, the cinema is largely employed. But even in the most conservative and the most puritanic countries (though conservative and puritanic are by no means necessarily identical) the need of education in matters of sex is generally accepted, and, here and there, more or less cautiously carried out, though all its implications are yet far from being generally accepted.

Yet this innovation alone represents an enormous change in the incidence of taboos. Of all the taboos in civilization up to recent years none has been stronger than that against speech on matters of sex. It is all the more powerful because it is one of the taboos which have been inherited by civilization from savagery, and in the transfer has grown even stronger. Even in the early books of the Bible when we read of 'feet' they are not always the part of the body which we usually thereby understand, and thousands of years later, when I was a child in London, I was told that America is the land where it is indelicate to speak of 'legs,' the word 'limbs' being used instead. There is no doubt about the progress made during the present century. But we must not be surprised that even those who no longer believe in the taboo often still observe it in practice. The taboo had always involved private revolts, with outbursts of what even those who thus revolted felt to be filthy and disgusting language, so that they were all the more anxious to keep them secret from the young. It was the most difficult thing in the world to speak to children, their own children, of what they themselves still instinctively felt to be filthy and disgusting. It could only be done rightly and naturally when the parents had undergone more than mere intellectual conviction,

something which religious people used to call 'a change of heart,' and that change itself, to be really operative, should take place early in life. So that still to-day the child is too easily allowed to follow the old paths, and a vicious circle remains established.

Undoubtedly a change is slowly taking place. The new mother is gradually being moulded to match the new child. We are less and less called upon to witness the amusing yet rather pathetic spectacle of the well-informed child carefully tempering his or more often her enlightenment to the virginal sensitiveness of a 'Victorian' parent. The literature of recent times is alone enough to create a new atmosphere in this matter, since the taboos that are falling off life are at the same time falling off the literature of life. A double stream is indeed here at work, the stream of science and the stream of art: on the one hand a flood of scientific and pseudo-scientific books aiming at the enlightenment of the public in matters of sex, and from the other side a flood of novels in which sexual situations are set forth with a freedom, or a nonchalance, unknown, at all events in English literature, since the robustious medieval romanticism of Scott and the elegant drawing-room manners of Jane Austen put the eighteenth century to shame, Victor Hugo with his fellows and followers performing the same purgation in French literature. No doubt the supporters of the old traditional taboos revolt at moments, and spasmodic attempts at suppression occur from time to time, but they are not only ineffectual, but capricious, for what offends tradition in one country passes without protest in another.

We are not here, however, concerned with protests or with the censorship. They represent the last convulsive movements of a generation which still possesses a measure of official power but is rapidly dying. Disregarding them altogether, we easily distinguish a modern stream in imaginative literature which arose about the middle of the last century and gradually gained full strength and influence towards the beginning of the present century, while at the same time as

that stream arose an older stream was failing. Victor Hugo, already mentioned, was the supreme European representative of the earlier stream, Ibsen may be said to represent the later stream. Zola stands as the world-famous representative of the transition between the two, springing out of the romantic movement and unconsciously retaining much of its spirit, while at the same time he consciously—however mistakenly—aimed at scientific veracity, and vigorously displayed a grasp of real things which disdained any charge of crudity.

Even within the nineteenth century we may see the whole process in the English novel. Dickens belongs to the early stream and Hardy to the later stream, while Meredith, starting from romanticism and reaching towards the modern spirit, represents the transition. In America the two movements are just as distinct. No one doubts to which stream belong Hawthorne and James, and to which Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson. Whatever their comparative rank as artists, these two groups in both countries show a different social outlook, different conventions and ideals, different taboos, different values of life. The earlier writers, if springing from the higher social environment, observe ostentatiously a great number of traditional decorums, and if from a lower, they are gushing over with a respectable sentimentality which brought tears to the faces of their contemporaries and smiles or yawns to ours. The decorums of the first group have disappeared from the later group, and their taboos may be said to be almost reversed. Henry de Montherlant, one of the younger poets and novelists of France, finds it natural to begin a book (*La Petite Infante de Castille*) with the simple and homely (but incorrect) statement that there is only one public urinal in Barcelona. Imagine Henry James, or, for the matter of nationality, Victor Hugo, thus preluding a book! In the opening chapter of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, the *Iliad*, maybe, of our latest European war, Remarque discusses latrines as clearly a subject of the first importance; yet it does not seem to have been

thought so when the Homeric account of the first great European war was written, nor (except in Ireland in relation to Queen Medbh) was it a recognized aspect of great warlike exploits. It may seem a small matter, but it is probably significant of a different attitude towards life. The classical tradition, as well as the Christian, is here reversed, and the old champions of Greek literature (like Mr. Gilbert Murray) are even more shocked than the archbishops. This new attitude involves not a single point only, but at all points a closer grasp of real facts, with a more negligent, or a more playful, attitude towards pretensions. It means, very significantly, a greater disregard for the prettinesses of life and a greater regard for its austerities. What is called 'vice' is no longer made charming and what is called 'virtue' no longer easy and comfortable. To the people of the nineteenth century it was shocking to make vice anything but prettily elegant and virtue anything but comfortably happy. They considered it immoral, even punishable. Our view to-day is more nearly the opposite of that, the taboos are not so much abolished as inverted. And there can be little doubt that, being nearer to the facts, the new attitude is in reality the more moral attitude.

Life, as we live it to-day, is more highly socialized, more urbanized, more—so far as external relationships are concerned—'standardized,' than it used to be. The world has become uncomfortably small; we have not yet gained a complete control of our excessive procreational activity; so that there are far too many of us, and, being so closely crowded together, we have to adopt all sorts of new precautions to avoid friction and permit of the greatest amount of mutual freedom available within our unduly narrow frontiers. So many of the old traditional social taboos having become antiquated or no longer adequate, there has been a furious activity in making new laws and regulations, without a due recognition of the fact that old taboos can only be replaced by new taboos, and that mere legal enactments, enforced, or left unenforced, by paid officials or the

police, to be effective must themselves become taboos, printed on the fleshy tablets of the individual citizen's heart. If they are thus to become of the nature of taboos they must be few in number, indisputable in value, and so urgent that they are felt to be on the way to become instinctive. No society can live wholesomely by any other sort of regulation, and State legislatures stultify themselves when they fail to realize that their part is merely to formulate, and record, and support the growth and the decay of taboos.

Sex taboos are at the centre of this process, not only because it so happens that sex is a sphere in which change has of late taken place with unusual rapidity, but because sex is at once an extremely important region—so that it becomes a training ground for the social activities generally—and yet a region in which most of the essentials do not lend themselves to direct external control, and so its taboos must be both made and maintained, at all events in the first place, privately.

During recent years, a half of this truth, the more destructive half, has become widely realized. It is realized, that is to say, that many of the family and other social restrictions which were once inculcated on youth are outworn and no longer correspond to the facts of the modern situation. The discovery was made with enthusiasm by many who jumped to the conclusion that a go-as-you-please policy—a naïve obedience to the crude and uninformed impulse of the moment—was henceforth right and justifiable. As Mr. Aldous Huxley, who has interspersed his delineation of some aspects of contemporary life with a wise criticism, well remarks in a thoughtful essay, the modern reaction against 'Victorian' respectability, by taking the cheap form of promiscuity, has too often 'exchanged the bad features of the nineteenth for the bad features of the eighteenth century'; it has bartered, he acutely points out, the puritanical repression of sex for another form of repression, just as full of hatred and contempt as the

puritanic, but effected by the 'deadening influence of promiscuous indulgences.'

It seldom takes long, however, for those who follow this line of conduct to find where it inevitably leads. They have failed to see that in throwing away the old worn-out taboos they had still retained the licence that those taboos assumed. The taboos, having largely become merely external restraints, had the function of keeping within bounds an impulsive licence which was always tending to break those bounds and demanded, perhaps rightly, an occasional orgy. The two, on the whole, balanced each other, and were necessary to each other; the external taboo was functionless without the licence, and the licence was mischievous without the taboo. To cast aside the one without casting aside the other merely produces confusion.

The old licences are just as much out of place under present conditions as the old taboos. Life under the former conditions was certainly a discipline, but a discipline mainly imposed from without, whence the rebellion against it as soon as its prohibitions were found to be dead. Life, however, is always a discipline, even for the lower animals as well as for man; it is so dangerous that only by submitting to some sort of discipline can we become equipped to live in any true sense at all. The disappearance of the discipline of the old external taboos thus imposes upon us, inescapably, the creation of a new self-discipline of internal and personal taboos. If we are not responsible to an outside order which we no longer regard as valid, then we are responsible before the inner tribunal of the self which cannot but be valid for us so long as we are alive.<sup>1</sup>

That really is the task for all who are young to-day.

<sup>1</sup> When the above was written I had not in mind the writings of Dr. Marett. But it is a satisfaction to me to record that my conception of 'taboo' is in essential respects the same as that maintained by so distinguished a student of this group of psychological phenomena. See, for instance, chap. iii of his *Threshold of Religion*. Similarly Professor Radcliffe Brown declares (*Man*, Sept. 1926) that the same general principle underlies taboos in all parts of the world; 'however such customs may vary in detail in different cultures, the same fundamental sociological laws underlie them all.'

And so far from being an easy and pleasant task, as some may at first have thought when they saw the old taboos melting away, it involves difficulties which their grandparents never knew. If it means the making of new and personal taboos, it involves a slow self-development and self-responsibility, which is not only in itself a continual discipline, but runs the risk of conflict with others engaged in the same task and with the same sincerity. For what we may still term morals, since it has now become an individual outcome, will not be entirely the same for all individuals. All our moralities, indeed, cannot fail to be modifications of a common pattern because we all belong to the same community; but the differences involve a greater degree of mutual understanding and forbearance than when uniform taboos were imposed from outside.

We come here on a conflict such as lies at the foundation of all life. On the one hand we have the disappearance of the old traditional taboos, based on external authority, with the demand that we should create a new discipline from within; on the other hand we have the insistence, which some of the most representative minds of to-day emphasize, on 'the new conformity which a new social solidarity is making.' How to harmonize those opposing demands? But it is in harmonizing them that all life consists. In words which were meant to apply to creative art and thought, but really apply equally well to the practical art of living, an anonymous English writer has lately well said: 'It would seem that for many years there can be no common emotional or intellectual background which may be taken for granted; and if in the result not a little of a man's power must be spent in creating his own scheme of values, still there is no immediate remedy, for it is in the nature of contemporary thinking that it demands an effort as individual as it must be unsparingly honest if it is to have any meaning for our generation.'

So if the people of the old generation now leaving the world are often shocked to see swept away the old rigid

taboos they were brought up in, they may leave it in peace. Life, after all, may not have been so hard for them, not so hard perhaps as for the younger generation. None the less that younger generation, also, may continue to carry lightly its burden, on youthful shoulders, joyfully creating a new world.

## IMPRESSIONS AND COMMENTS

FOR many years I have been accustomed to make notes on random leaves of the things in Life and Thought which have chanced to strike my attention. Such records of personal reaction to the outer and inner world have been helpful to my work, and so had their uses.

But as one grows older the possibilities of these uses become more limited. One realizes in the autumn that leaves no longer have a vital function to perform; there is no longer any need why they should cling to the tree. So let them be scattered to the winds!

It is inevitable that such leaves cannot be judged in the same way as though they constituted a book. They are much more like loose pages from a journal. Thus they tend to be more personal, more idiosyncratic, than in a book it would be lawful for a writer to be. Often, also, they show blanks which the intelligence of the reader must fill in. At the best they merely present the aspect of the moment, the flash of a single facet of life, only to be held in the brain provided one also holds therein many other facets, for the fair presentation of the great crystal of life. So it comes about that much is here demanded of the reader, so much that I feel it rather my duty to warn him away than to hold out any fallacious lures.

The fact has especially to be reckoned with that such Impressions and Comments, stated absolutely and without consideration for divergent Impressions and Comments, may seem, as a friend who has read some of them points out, to lack explicit reasonableness. I trust they are not lacking in implicit reasonableness. They spring, even when they seem to contradict one another, from a central vision, and from a central faith too deeply rooted to care to hasten unduly towards the most obvious goal. From that central core these Impressions and Comments are concerned with many things, with the miracles of

nature, with the charms and absurdities of the human worm, that golden wire wherefrom hang all the joys and the mysteries of art. I am only troubled because I know how very feebly these things are imaged here. For I have only the medium of words to work in, only words, words that are flung about in the street and often in the mud, only words with which to mould all my images of the beauty and gaiety of the world.

Such as they are, these random leaves are here scattered to the winds. It may be that as they flutter to the earth one or another may be caught by the hand of the idle passer-by, and even seem worthy of contemplation. For no two leaves are alike even when they fall from the same tree.

24 July 1912. I looked out from my room about ten o'clock at night. Almost below the open window a young woman was clinging to the flat wall for support, with occasional floundering movements towards the attainment of a firmer balance. In the dim light she seemed decently dressed in black; her handkerchief was in her hand; she had evidently been sick.

Every few moments someone passed by. It was quite clear that she was helpless and distressed. No one turned a glance towards her—except a policeman. He gazed at her searchingly as he passed, but without stopping or speaking; she was drunk, no doubt, but not too obtrusively incapable; he mercifully decided that she was of no immediate professional concern to him. She soon made a more violent effort to gain muscular control of herself, but merely staggered round her own escaping centre of gravity and sank gently on the pavement in a sitting posture.

Every few moments people continued to pass within a few inches of her—men, women, couples. Unlike the priest and the Levite in the parable, they never turned away, but pursued their straight course with callous rectitude. Not one seemed so much as to see her. In a minute or two, stimulated perhaps by some

sense of the impropriety of her position, she rose to her feet again, without much difficulty, and returned to cling to the wall.

A few minutes later I saw a decently-dressed young woman, evidently of the working class, walk quietly, but without an instant's hesitation, straight up to the figure against the wall. (It was what, in Moscow, the first passer-by would have done.) I could hear her speaking gently and kindly, though of what she said I could only catch, 'Where do you live?' No answers were audible, and perhaps none were given. But the sweet Samaritan continued speaking gently. At last I heard her say, 'Come round the corner,' and with only the gentle pressure of a hand on the other's arm she guided her round the corner near which they stood, away from the careless stream of passengers, to recover at leisure. I saw no more.

Our modern civilization, it is well known, long since transformed 'chivalry'; it was once an offer of help to distressed women; it is now exclusively reserved for women who are not distressed and clearly able to help themselves. We have to realize that it can scarcely even be said that our growing urban life, however it fosters what has been called 'urbanity,' has any equally fostering influence on instinctive mutual helpfulness as an element of that urbanity. We do not even see the helpless people who go to the wall or to the pavement. This is true of men and women alike. But when instinctive helpfulness is manifested it seems most likely to reveal itself in a woman. That is why I would like to give to women all possible opportunities—rights and privileges alike—for social service.

*22 October.* Gaby Deslys is just now a great attraction at the Palace Theatre. One is amused to note how this very Parisian person and her very Parisian performance are with infinite care adapted to English needs, and attuned to this comfortably respectable, not to say stolidly luxurious, house. We are shown a bedroom with a bed in it, and a little dressing-room by the side.

Her task is to undress and go to bed. It is the sort of scene that may be seen anywhere in any music-hall all over Europe. But in the capital city of British property, and in a music-hall patronized by royalty, this delicate task is surrounded and safeguarded by infinite precautions. One seems to detect that the scene has been rehearsed before a committee of ambiguously mixed composition. One sees the care with which they determined the precise moment at which the electric light should be switched off in the dressing-room; one realizes their firm decision that the lady must, after all, go to bed fully clothed. One is conscious throughout of a careful anxiety that every avenue to 'suggestiveness' shall be just hinted and at once decently veiled. There is something unpleasant, painful, degrading in this ingenious mingling of prurience and prudery. The spectators, if they think of it at all, must realize that throughout the whole trivial performance their emotions are being treated with an insulting precaution which would be more in place in a lunatic asylum than in a gathering of presumably responsible men and women. In the end one is made to feel how far more purifying and ennobling than this is the spectacle of absolute nakedness, even on the stage, yes, even on the stage.

And my thoughts go back to the day, less than two years ago, when for the first time this was clearly brought home to me by a performance—like this and yet so unlike—in a very different place, the simple, bare, almost sordid Teatro Gayarre. Most of the turns were of the same ordinary sort that might be seen in many another music-hall of the long Calle Marques del Duero. But at the end came on a performer who was, I soon found, of altogether another order. The famous Bianca Stella, as the programme announced, shortly to start on her South American tour, was appearing for a limited number of nights. I had never heard of Bianca Stella. She might, to look at, be Austrian, and one could imagine, from some of her methods, that she was a pupil of Isadora Duncan. She was certainly a highly trained

and accomplished artist; though peculiarly fitted for her part by nature, still an artist, not a child of nature.

Of fine and high type, tall and rather slim, attractive in face, almost faultless in proportion and detail, playing her difficult part with unfailing dignity and grace, Bianca Stella might in general type be a Bohemian out of Stratz's *Schönheit des weiblichen Körpers*, or even an aristocratic young Englishwoman. She comes on fully dressed, like Gaby Deslys, but with no such luxurious environment, and slowly disrobes, dancing all the while, one delicate garment at a time, until only a gauzy chemise is left and she flings herself on the bed. Then she rises, fastens on a black mantle which floats behind concealing nothing, at the same moment removing her chemise. There is now no concealment left save by a little close-fitting triangular shield of spangled silver, as large as the palm of her hand, fastened round her waist by an almost invisible cord, and she dances again with her beautiful, dignified air. Once more, this time in the afternoon, I went to see Bianca Stella dance. Now there was a dark curtain as a background. She came on with a piece of simple white drapery wound round her body; as she dances she unfolds it, holds it behind her as she dances, finally flings it away, dancing with her fleckless and delicately proportioned body before the dark curtain. Throughout the dances her dignity and grace, untouched by voluptuous appeal and yet always human, remained unfailing. Other dancers who came on before her, clothed dancers, had been petulantly wanton to their hearts' desire. Bianca Stella seemed to belong to another world. As she danced, when I noted the spectators, I could see here and there a gleam in the eyes of coarse faces, though there was no slightest movement or gesture or look of the dancer to evoke it. For these men Bianca Stella had danced in vain, for—it remains symbolically true—only the pure in heart can see God. To see Bianca Stella truly was to realize that it is not desire but a sacred awe which nakedness inspires, an intoxication of the spirit rather than of the senses, no flame of lust but rather a purifying and

exalting fire. To feel otherwise has merely been the unhappy privilege of men intoxicated by the stifling and unwholesome air of modern artificiality. To the natural man, always and everywhere, even to-day, nakedness has in it a power of divine terror, which ancient men throughout the world crystallized into beautiful rites, so that when a woman unveiled herself it seemed to them that thunderstorms were silenced, and that noxious animals were killed, and that vegetation flourished, and that all the powers of evil were put to flight. That was their feeling, and, absurd as it may seem to us, a right and natural instinct lay beneath it. Some day, perhaps, a new moral reformer, a great apostle of purity, will appear among us, having his scourge in his hand, and enter our theatres and music-halls to purge them. Since I have seen Bianca Stella I know something of what he will do. It is not nakedness that he will cast out. It will more likely be clothes.

So it is that when I contemplate Gaby Deslys or her sort, it is of Bianca Stella that I think.

1 November. 'The way to spiritual life,' wrote George Meredith in one of his recently published letters, 'lies in the complete unfolding of the creature, not in the nipping of his passions. . . . To the flourishing of the spirit, then, through the healthy exercise of the senses!'

Yes, all that is very good, I heartily subscribe. And yet, and yet, there lingers a certain hesitation; one vaguely feels that, as a complete statement of the matter, it hardly satisfies all the demands of to-day. George Meredith belonged to the early Victorian period which had encased its head in a huge bonnet and girdled its loins with a stiff crinoline. His function was to react vitally to that state of things, and he performed his function magnificently, evoking, of course, from the *Ordeal of Richard Feverel* onwards, a doubtless salutary amount of scandal and amazement. The time demanded that its preachers should take their text from the spiritually excessive Blake: 'Damn braces, bless relaxes.' On

that text, throughout his life, Meredith heroically and eloquently preached.

But nowadays that seems a long time ago. The great preacher of to-day cannot react against the attraction to braces, for it no longer exists. We are all quite ready to 'damn braces.' The moralist, therefore, may now legitimately hold the balance fair and firm, without giving it a little pressure in one direction for wholesome ends of admonition.

When we so look at the matter we have to realize that, biologically and morally alike, healthy restraint is needed for 'the flourishing of the spirit' quite as much as healthy exercise; that bracing as well as relaxing is part of the soul's hygiene; that the directive force of a fine asceticism, exerted towards positive and not towards negative ends, is an essential part of life itself.

You might say that a fountain that leaps largely and exquisitely up towards the sky only needs freedom and space. But no, it also needs compression and force, a mighty restrained energy at its roots, of which it is the gay and capricious flower. That, you may say, is not really a vital thing. But take a real flower, the same mechanism is still at work. The flexible convolvulus that must cling to any support from which to expand its delicate bells needs not only freedom to expand but much more the marvellous energy that was wound up and confined, like a spring, in the seed. It will find its own freedom, but it will not find its own force.

Therefore let us hold the moral balance fair and firm. The utmost freedom, the utmost restraint, we need them both. They are two aspects of the same thing. We cannot have freedom in any triumphant degree unless we have restraint. The main point is, that we should not fossilize either our freedoms or our restraints. Every individual needs—harmoniously with the needs of other individuals—the freedoms and restraints his own nature demands. Every age needs new freedoms and new restraints. In the making of new freedoms and new restraints lies the rhythm of life.

*3 January 1913.* I chanced to walk along the village street behind two little girls of the people, evidently sisters, with ribbons round their uncovered heads, filleting the hair which fell in careless ringlets on their backs. It was hair of the bright flaxen sort, which the poets have conventionally called 'golden,' the hair one sees so often on the angels of the Italian primitive painters—though not so often on living Italians. It is the hair which always seems to me more beautiful than any other, and I felt as if I wanted to follow these plain commonplace children as the rats followed the Pied Piper.

The vision brought to my mind the fact I have so often had occasion to realize, that aesthetic attraction has nothing to do with erotic attraction, however at their origins, it may have been, the two attractions were identical or sprang from the same source, and though they have constantly reacted on, and sometimes deflected, each other. Aesthetically this hair fascinates me; it is an exhilarating delight whenever I meet it. But I have never felt any personal attraction in association with this hair, or any great personal interest in the people it belonged to.

What one aesthetically craves is the outcome of one set of influences, due to one's special vision, one's traditions, one's training and environment, influences that are no doubt mainly objective and impersonal, operative on most of one's fellows. But what one personally craves is the outcome of another set of influences, due to one's peculiar and instinctive organic constitution; it is based on one's individual instinctive needs and may not be precisely the same for any two persons.

The aestheticians are not here indeed altogether in harmony. But it would seem that, while the aesthetic and the sexual must frequently and legitimately overlap, they are definitely separate, that it is possible to distinguish the aesthetically- from the sexually - attractive in different persons and even in different features of the same person, that while it is frequently natural and right to love a 'beautiful' woman, to love a woman because she is beautiful is as unreasonable as to fall in

love with a beautiful statue. The aesthetically-attractive and the sexually-attractive tend to be held apart. They are two different 'substances,' as the medieval metaphysician would have said. From the standpoint of clear thinking, and also of social well-being, the confusion of them is, in theological language, damnable. In so far as beauty is a personal lust it is unfit for wholesome social ends. Only in so far as it is lifted above personal desire is it fitted to become a social inspiration.

29 January. For supper, we are told, Milton used often to eat a few olives. That statement has frequently recurred to my mind. I never grow weary of the significance of little things. What do the so-called great things of life count for in the end, the fashion of a man's showing-off for the benefit of his fellows? It is the little things that give its savour or its bitterness to life, the little things that direct the currents of activity, the little things that alone really reveal the intimate depths of personality. *De minimis non curat lex.* But against that dictum of human law one may place the Elder Pliny's maxim concerning natural law: *Nusquam magis quam in minimis tota est natura.* For in the sphere of nature's laws it is only the minimal things that are worth caring about, the least things in the world, mere specks on the walls of life, as it seems to you. But one sets one's eyes to them, and, behold, they are chinks that look out into infinity.

Milton is one of the 'great' things in English life and literature, and his admirers dwell on his great achievements. These achievements often leave me a little cold, intellectually acquiescent, nothing more. But when I hear of these olives which the blind old scholar-poet was wont to eat for supper I am at once brought nearer to him. I intuitively divine what they meant to him.

Olives are not the most obvious food for an English Puritan of the seventeenth century, though olive-oil is said to have been used here even in the fourteenth century. Milton might more naturally, one supposes,

like his arch-puritanic foe, Prynne, have 'refocillated' his brain with ale and bread, and indeed he was still too English, and perhaps too wise, to disdain either.

But Milton had lived in Italy. There the most brilliant and happy days of his life had been spent. All the rest of his real and inner life was but an echo of the music he had heard in Italy. For Milton was only on one side of his nature the austere Latin secretary of Cromwell and the ferocious opponent of Salmasius. He was also the champion of the tardy English Renaissance, the grave and beautiful youth whose every fibre thrilled to the magic of Italy. For two rich months he had lived in Florence, then the most attractive of Italian cities, with Gaddi, Dati, Coltellini and the rest for his friends. He had visited Galileo, then just grown blind, as he was himself destined to be. His inner sight always preserved the old visions he had garnered

At evening from the top of Fesole,  
Or in Valdarno.

Now at last, in the company of sour and ignorant Puritans who counted him one of themselves, while a new generation grew up which ignored him and which he disdained, in this sulphurous atmosphere of London which sickened and drove away his secretary Ellwood, Milton ate a handful of olives. And all Italy came to him in those olives.

'What! when the sun rises do you not see a round disk of fire, somewhat like a guinea?'

'Oh no, no, no!' said Blake, 'I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host.' And these dull green exotic fruits which the blind Milton ate bedwards were the heralds of dreams diviner than he freighted with magnificent verse.

10 February. A French soprano, and it is the first time she has sung on an English platform. She walks on slowly and stands statuesquely motionless while the preliminary bars are being played. One notes her elegant Parisian costume, clinging and very low cut, every detail of her appearance carefully thought out,

constituting a harmony in itself, though not perhaps a harmony with this negligent Sunday afternoon environment in which the singer finds herself. Her voice is finely trained and under complete control, she enters into the spirit of the operatic scene she sings, dramatically, yet with restraint, with modulated movements, now of her arms, now of her whole supple body. In her voice, as in her body, there is always a reserve of energy, a dignified self-respect; there is never any self-abandonment. She had sung first in French, now she comes on in an Italian air, and afterwards is not too coyly reticent in taking an encore which is in English, to a piano accompaniment, and when that is over she hastens to bring the accompanist by the hand to her side before the audience, and bows, sweetly and graciously, with a gesture of the whole body, yet again with a certain reserve, not, as one may see some great singers, symbolically clasping her arms round the public and kissing it with humble gratitude. She is a complete success with her audience.

Yet she is really, one divines, a fairly commonplace person. And she is not beautiful. And even her voice has no marvellous original quality. She has on her side a certain quality of nervous texture to mould artistically, but that is not a personal possession but merely a quality of her race. She has laboriously wrought this ductile nervous tissue to her own ends. By force of long training, discipline, art, she has made herself what she desired to be. She has become all that she had in her to be. She has given to the world all that the world had any right to ask of her.

That is all. But this training and this discipline, the ability to be oneself and to impart graciously to others the utmost that they have any right to demand—is not that the whole art of living and the entire code of morality?

*8 April.* As very slowly, by rare sudden glimpses, one obtains an insight into the lives of people, one is constantly impressed by the large amount of their moral

activity which is hidden from view. No doubt there are people who are all of a piece and all on the surface, people who are all that they seem and nothing beyond what they seem. Yet I am sometimes tempted to think that most people circle round the world as the moon circles round it, always carefully displaying one side only to the human spectators' view, and concealing unknown secrets on their hidden hemispheres.

The side that is displayed is, in the moral sphere, generally called 'respectable,' and the side that is hidden 'vicious.' What men show they call their 'virtues.' But if one looks at the matter broadly and naturally, may it not be that the vices themselves are after all nothing but disreputable virtues? It is not only schoolboys and servant-girls who spend a considerable part of their time in doing things which are flagrantly and absurdly contradictory of that artificially modelled propriety which in public they exhibit. It is just the same, one finds by chance revelations, among merchant princes and leaders of learned professions. For it is not merely the degenerate and the unfit who cannot confine all their activities within the limits prescribed by the conventional morality which surrounds them, but often the ablest and most energetic men, the sweetest and gentlest women. Moreover, it would often seem that on this unseen side of their lives they may be even more heroic, more inspired, more ideal, more vitally stimulated, than they are on that side with which they confront the world:

Suppose people were morally inverted, turned upside down, with their vices above water, and their respectable virtues submerged, suppose that they were, so to say, turned morally inside out. And suppose that vice became respectable and the respectabilities vicious, that men and women exercised their vices openly and indulged their virtues in secret, would the world be any the worse? Would there be a difference in the real nature of people if they changed the fashion of wearing the natural hairy fur of their coats inside instead of outside?

And if there is a difference, what is that difference?

10 April. I am a little surprised sometimes to find how commonly people suppose that when one is unable to accept their opinions one is therefore necessarily hostile to them. Thus a few years ago, I recall, Professor Freud wrote how much pleasure it would give him if he could overcome my hostility to his doctrines. But, as I hastened to reply, I have no hostility to his doctrines, though they may not at every point be acceptable to my own mental constitution. If I see a man pursuing a dangerous mountain track I am not hostile in being unable to follow far on the same track. On the contrary, I may call attention to that pioneer's adventure, may admire his courage and skill, even applaud the results of his efforts, or at all events the great ideal that animated him. In all this I am not with him, but I am not hostile.

Why indeed should one ever be hostile? What a vain thing is this hostility! A dagger that pierces the hand of him that holds it. They who take up the sword shall perish by the sword was the lesson Jesus taught and himself never learnt it. Ferociously, recklessly, that supreme master of denunciation took up the sword of his piercing speech against the 'scribes' and the 'Pharisees' of the 'generation of vipers,' until he made their very names a byword and a reproach. And yet the Church of Jesus has been the greatest generator of scribes and Pharisees the world has ever known, and they have even proved the very bulwark of it to this day. Look, again at Luther. There was the Catholic Church dying by inches, gently, even exquisitely. And here came that gigantic peasant, with his too exuberant energy, battered the dying Church into acute sensibility, kicked it into emotion, galvanized it into life, prolonged its existence for a thousand years. The man who sought to exterminate the Church proved to be the greatest benefactor the Church had ever known.

The end men attain is rarely the end they desired. Some go out like Saul, the son of Kish, who sought his father's asses and found a kingdom, and some sally forth to seek kingdoms and find merely asses. In the

one case and in the other they are led by a hand that they knew not to a goal that was not so much their own as that of their enemies.

So it is that we live for ever on hostility. Our friends may be the undoing of us; in the end it is our enemies who save us. The views we hate become ridiculous because they adopt them. Their very thoroughness leads to an overwhelming reaction on whose waves we ride to victory. Even their skill calls out our greater skill and our finer achievement. At their best, at their worst, alike they help us. They are the very life-blood in our veins.

It is a strange world in which, as Paulhan says (and I chance to alight on his concordant words even as I write this note), 'things are not employed according to their essence, but, as a rule, for ends which are directly opposed to that essence.' We are more unsuccessful than we know. And if we could all realize more keenly that we are fighting not so much in our own cause as in the cause of our enemies, how greatly it would make for the visible harmony of the world.

23 April. I see to-day that Justice Darling—perhaps going a little out of his way— informed the jury in the course of a summing up that he 'could not read a chapter of Rabelais without being bored to death.' The assumption in this *obiter dictum* seemed to be that Rabelais is an obscene writer. And the implication seemed to be that to a healthily virtuous and superior mind like the Judge's the obscene is merely wearisome.

I note the remark by no means as a foolish eccentricity, but because it is really typical. I seem to remember that, as a boy, I met with a very similar assumption, though scarcely a similar implication, in Macaulay's *Essays*, which at that time I very carefully read. I thereupon purchased Rabelais in order to investigate for myself, and thus made the discovery that Rabelais is a great philosopher, a discovery which Macaulay had scarcely prepared me for, so that I imagined it to be original, until a few years later I chanced to light upon

the observations of Coleridge concerning Rabelais's wonderful philosophic genius and his refined and exalted morality, and I realized for the first time—with an unforgettable thrill of joy—that I was not alone.

It seems clearly to be true that on the appearance in literature of the obscene—I use the word in a colourless and technical sense to indicate the usually unseen or reverse side of life, the side behind the scenes, the *postscenia vitae* of Lucretius, and not implying anything necessarily objectionable—it at once for most readers covers the whole field of vision. The reader may like it or dislike, but his reaction, especially if he is English, seems to be so intense that it absorbs his whole psychic activity. (I say 'especially if he is English,' because, though this tendency seems universal, it is strongly emphasized in the Anglo-Saxon mind. Gaby Deslys has remarked that she has sometimes felt embarrassed on the London stage by finding that an attempt to arouse mere amusement has been received with intense seriousness: 'When I appear *en pantalon* the whole audience seems to hold its breath!') Henceforth the book is either to be cherished secretly and silently, or else to be spoken of loudly with protest and vituperation. And this reaction is by no means limited to ignorant and unintelligent readers; it affects ordinary people, it affects highly intelligent and super-refined people, it may even affect eminent literary personages. The book may be by a great philosopher and contain his deepest philosophy, but let an obscene word appear in it, and that word will draw every reader's attention. Thus Shakespeare used to be considered an obscene writer, in need of expurgation, and may be so considered still, though his obscene passages even to our prudish modern ears are so few that they could surely be collected on a single page. Thus also it is that even the Bible, the God-inspired book of Christendom, has been judicially declared to be obscene. It may have been a reasonable decision, for judicial decisions ought, no doubt, to reflect popular opinion; a judge must be judicial, whether or not he is just.

One wonders how far this is merely due to defective education and therefore modifiable, and how far it is based on an ineradicable tendency of the human mind. Of course the forms of obscenity vary in every age, they are varying every day. Much which for the old Roman was obscene is not so for us; much which for us is obscene would have made a Roman smile at our simplicity. But even savages sometimes have obscene words not fit to utter in good aboriginal society, and a very strict code of propriety which to violate would be obscene. Rabelais in his immortal work wore a fantastic and extravagant robe, undoubtedly of very obscene texture, and it concealed from stupid eyes, as he doubtless desired that it should, one of the greatest and wisest spirits that ever lived. It would be pleasant to think that in the presence of such men who in their gay and daring and profound way present life in its wholeness and find it sweet, it may some day be the instinct of the ordinary person to enjoy the vision reverently, if not on his knees, thanking his God for the privilege vouchsafed to him. But one has no sort of confidence that it will be so.

*27 April.* Every garden tended by love is a new revelation, and to see it for the first time gives one a new thrill of joy, above all at this moment of the year when flowers are still young and virginal, yet already profuse and beautiful. It is the moment, doubtless, when Linnaeus, according to the legend, saw a gorse-covered English common for the first time and fell on his knees to thank God for the sight. (I say 'legend,' for I find on consulting Fries that the story must be a praiseworthy English invention, since it was in August that Linnaeus visited England.)

Linnaeus, it may be said, was a naturalist. But it is not merely the naturalist who experiences this emotion; it is common to the larger part of humanity. Savages deck their bodies with flowers just as craftsmen and poets weave them into their work; the cottager cultivates his little garden, and the town artisan cherishes his flower-

pots. However alien one's field of interest may be, flowers still make their appeal. I recall the revealing thrill of joy with which, on a certain day, a quite ordinary day nearly forty years ago, my eye caught the flash of the red roses amid the greenery of my veranda in the Australian bush. And this bowl of wallflowers before me now—these old-fashioned, homely, shapeless, intimately fascinating flowers, with their faint ancient fragrance, their antique faded beauty, their symbolization of the delicate and contented beauty of old age—seem to me fit for the altar of whatever might be my dearest god.

Why should flowers possess this emotional force? It is a force which is largely independent of association and quite abstracted from direct vital use. Flowers are purely impersonal, they subserve neither of the great primary ends of life. They concern us even less than the sunset. And yet we are irresistibly impelled to 'consider the lilies.'

Surely it is as symbols, manifoldly complex symbols, that flowers appeal to us so deeply. They are, after all, the organs of sex, and for some creatures they are also the sources of food. So that if we only look at life largely enough flowers are in the main stream of vital necessity. They are useless to man, but man cannot cut himself off from the common trunk of life. He is related to the insects and even in the end to the trees. So that it may not be so surprising that while flowers are vitally useless to man they are yet the very loveliest symbols to him of all the things that are vitally useful. There is nothing so vitally intimate to himself that man has not seen it, and rightly seen it, symbolically embodied in flowers. Study the folk-nomenclature of plants in any country, or glance through Aigremont's *Volkserotik und Pflanzenwelt*. And the symbolization is not the less fascinating because it is so obscure, so elusive, usually so unconscious, developed by sudden happy inspiration of peasant genius, and because I am altogether ignorant why the morbid and nameless tones of these curved and wrinkled wallflowers delight me as

they once delighted my mother, and so, it may be, backwards, through ancient generations who dwelt in parsonages whence their gaze caught the flowers which the seventeenth-century herbalist said in his *Paradisus Terrestris* are 'often found growing on the old walls of churches.'

16 May. It is an error to suppose that solitude leads away from humanity. On the contrary it is Nature who brings us near to Man, her spoilt and darling child. The enemies of their fellows are bred, not in deserts, but in cities, where human creatures fester together in heaps. The lovers of their fellows come out of solitude, like those hermits of the Thebaid, who fled far from cities, who crucified the flesh, who seemed to hang to the world by no more than a thread, and yet were infinite in their compassion, and thought no sacrifice too great for a human being.

Here as I lie on the towans by a cloud of daisies among the waving and glistening grass, while the sea recedes along the stretching sands, and the cloudless sky throbs with the song of larks, and no human thing is in sight, it is, after all, of humanity that I am most conscious. I realize that there is no human function so exalted or so rare, none so simple or so humble, that it has not its symbol in nature; that if all the beauty of nature is in man, yet all the beauty of man is in nature. So it is that the shuttlecock of beauty is ever kept in living movement.

It is known to many that we need solitude to find ourselves. Perhaps it is not so well known that we need solitude to find our fellows. Even the Saviour is described as reaching mankind through the wilderness.

31 May. It often impresses me with wonder that in nature or in art exquisite beauty is apt to appear other than it is. Jules de Gaultier seeks to apply to human life a principle of Bovarism by which we always naturally seek to appear other than we are, as Madame Bovary sought, as sought all Flaubert's personages, and indeed,

less consciously on their creators' part, Gaultier claims, the great figures in all fiction. But sometimes I ask myself whether there is not in Nature herself a touch of *Madame Bovary*.

There is, however, this difference in the Bovarism of Nature's most exquisite moments. They seem other than they are not by seeming more than they are but by seeming less. It is by the attenuation of the medium, by an approach to obscurity, by an approximation to the faintness of a dream, that beauty is manifested. I recall the Greek head of a girl once shown at the Burlington Fine Arts Club—over which Rodin, who chanced to see it there, grew rapturous—and it seemed to be without substance or weight and almost transparent. '*Las Meninas*' scarcely seems to me a painting made out of solid pigments laid on to a material canvas, but rather a magically evoked vision that at any moment may tremble and pass out of sight. And when I awoke in the dawn a while ago, and saw a vase of tulips on the background of the drawn curtain over a window before me, the scene was so interpenetrated by the soft and diffused light that it seemed altogether purged of matter and nothing but mere loveliness remained. There are flowers the horticulturist delights to develop which no longer look like living and complex organisms, but only gay fragments of crinkled tissue-paper cut at random by the swift hand of a happy artist. James Hinton would be swept by emotion as he listened to some passage in Mozart. 'And yet,' he would say, 'there is nothing in it.' Blake said much the same of the drawings of Dürer. Even the universe is perhaps built on the same plan. 'In all probability matter is composed mainly of holes,' said Sir J. J. Thomson a few years ago; and almost at the same moment Poincaré was declaring that 'there is no such thing as matter, there are only holes in the ether.' The world is made out of nothing, and all supernal beauty would seem to be an approach to the divine mystery of nothingness. 'Clay is fashioned, and thereby the pot is made; but it is its hollowness that makes it useful,' said the first and greatest of the mystics. 'By

cutting out doors and windows the room is formed; it is the space which makes the room's use. So that when things are useful it is that in them which is nothing which makes them useful.' Use is the symbol of beauty, and it is through the doors and the windows of beautiful things that their beauty emerges. Man himself, 'the Beauty of the World,' emerges on the world through the door of a beautiful thing.

*20 June.* In a side-chapel there is a large and tall Virgin with seemingly closed eyes, a serene and gracious personage. Before this image of the Virgin Mother kneels a young girl, devoutly no doubt, though with a certain careless familiarity, with her dark hair down, and on her head the little transparent piece of lace which the Spanish woman, even the smallest Spanish girl-child, unlike the free-spirited Frenchwoman, never fails to adjust as she enters a church.

I have no sympathy with those who look on the Bible as an outworn book and the Church as an institution whose symbols are empty of meaning. It is a good thing that, somewhere amid our social order or disorder, the Mother whose child has no father save God should be regarded as an object of worship. It would be as well to maintain the symbol of that worship until we have really incorporated it into our hearts and are prepared in our daily life to worship the Mother whose child has no known father save God. It is not the final stage in family evolution, certainly, but a step in the right direction. So let us be thankful to the Bible for stating it so divinely and keeping it before our eyes in such splendid imagery.

The official guardians of the Bible have always felt it to be a dangerous book, to be concealed, as the Jews concealed their sacred things in the ark. When after many centuries they could no longer maintain the policy of concealing it in a foreign tongue which few could understand, a brilliant idea occurred to them. They flung the Bible in the vulgar tongue in millions of copies at the heads of the masses. And they dared them

to understand it! This audacity has been justified by the results. A sublime faith in human imbecility has seldom led those who cherish it astray.

No wonder they feel so holy a horror of eugenics!

28 June. Nowhere, it is said, are the offices of the Church more magnificently presented than in Barcelona. However this may be, I nowhere feel so much as in Spain that whatever may happen to Christianity it is essential that the ancient traditions of the Mass should be preserved, and the churches of Catholicism continue to be the arena of such sacred operas as the Mass, their supreme and classic type.

I do not assert that it need necessarily be maintained as a religious office. There are serious objections to the attempt at divine officiation by those who have no conviction of their own divine office. There are surely sufficient persons, even in pessimistic and agnostic Spain, to carry on the Mass in sincerity for a long time to come. When sincerity failed, I would hold that the Mass as an act of religion had come to an end.

It would remain as art. As art, as the embodied summary of a great ancient tradition, a supreme moment in the spiritual history of the world, the Mass would retain its vitality as surely as Dante's *Divine Comedy* retains its vitality, even though the stage of that Comedy has no more reality for most modern readers than the stage of Punch and Judy. So it is here. The play of the Mass has been wrought through centuries out of the finest intuitions, the loftiest aspirations, of a long succession of the most sensitively spiritual men of their time. Its external shell of superstition may fall away. But when that happens the play will gain rather than lose. It will become clearly visible as the divine drama it is, the embodied presentation of the soul's great adventure, the symbolic initiation of the individual into the spiritual life of the world.

It is not only for the perpetuation of the traditions of the recognized sacred offices that churches such as the Spanish churches continue to constitute the ideal stage.

Secular drama arises out of sacred drama, and at its most superb moments (as we see, earlier than Christianity, in the *Bacchae*, the final achievement of the mature art of Euripides) it still remains infused with the old sacred spirit and even the old sacred forms, for which the Church remains the only fitting background. It might possibly be so for *Parsifal*. Of all operas since *Parsifal* that I have seen, the *Ariane et Barbe Bleue* of Dukas and Maeterlinck seems to me the most beautiful, the most exalted in conception, the most finely symbolic, and surely of all modern operas it is that in which the ideas and the words, the music, the stage pictures, are wrought with finest artistry into one harmonious whole. It seems to me that the emotions aroused by such an opera as *Ariane* could only be fittingly expressed—unecclesiastical as Blue Beard's character may appear—in the frame of one of these old Catalonian churches. The unique possibilities of the church for dramatic art constitute one of the reasons why I shudder at the thought that these wonderful and fascinating buildings may some day be swept of their beauty and even torn down.

21 August. Is not a certain aloofness essential to our vision of the heaven of art?

As I write I glance up from time to time at the open door of a schoolhouse, and am aware of a dim harmony of soft, rich, deep colour and atmosphere framed by the doorway and momentarily falling into a balanced composition, purified of details by obscurity, the semblance of a Velasquez. Doors and windows and gateways vouchsafe to us perpetually the vision of a beauty apparently remote from the sphere of our sorrow, and the impression of a room as we gaze into it from without through the window is more beautiful than when we move within it. Every picture, the creation of the artist's eye and hand, is a vision seen through a window.

It is the delight of mirrors that they give something of the same impression as I receive from the schoolhouse doorway. In music-halls, and restaurants, and other places where large mirrors hang on the walls, we may

constantly be entranced by the lovely and shifting pictures of the commonplace things which they chance to frame. In the atmosphere of mirrors there always seems to be a depth and tone which eludes us in the actual direct vision. Mirrors cut off sections of the commonplace real world and hold them aloof from us in a sphere of beauty. From the days of the Greeks and Etruscans to the days of Henri de Régnier a peculiar suggestion of aesthetic loveliness has thus always adhered to the mirror. The most miraculous of pictures created by man, 'Las Meninas,' resembles nothing so much as the vision momentarily floated on a mirror. In this world we see 'as in a glass darkly,' said St. Paul, and he might have added that in so seeing we see more and more beautifully than we can ever hope to see 'face to face.'

There is sometimes even more deliciously the same kind of lovely attraction in the reflections of lakes and canals, and languid rivers and the pools of fountains. Here reality is mirrored so faintly and tremulously, so brokenly, so as it seems evanescently, that the simplest things may be purged and refined into suggestions of exquisite beauty. Again and again some scene of scarcely more than commonplace charm—seen from some bridge at Thetford, or by some canal at Delft, some pond in Moscow—imprints itself on the memory for ever, because one chances to see it under the accident of fit circumstance reflected in the water.

Still more mysterious, still more elusive, still more remote are the glorious visions of the external world which we may catch in a polished copper bowl, as in crystals and jewels and the human eye. Well might Böhme among the polished pots of his kitchen receive intimation of the secret light of the universe.

In a certain sense there is more in the tremulously faint and far reflection of a thing than there is in the thing itself. The dog who preferred the reflection of his bone in the water to the bone itself, though from a practical point of view he made a lamentable mistake, was aesthetically justified. No 'orb,' as Tennyson said,

is a 'perfect star' while we walk therein. Aloofness is essential to the beatific vision. If we entered its portals heaven would no longer be heaven.

30 *September*. When I pass through the little Cornish valley there is one tree on which my eye always dwells. It is of no greater size than many other trees in the valley, nor even, it may be to a casual glance, of any marked peculiarity; one might say, indeed, that in this alien environment, so far from its home on the other side of the world, it manifests a certain unfamiliar shyness, or a well-bred condescension to the conventions of the English floral world. Yet, such as it is, that tree calls up endless pictures from the recesses of memory, of the beautiful sun-suffused land where the eucalyptus in all its wonderful varieties, vast and insolent and solemn and fantastic, is lord of the floral land, and the mimosa, with the bewitching loveliness that aches for ever at one's heart, is the lady of the land.

So I walk along the Cornish valley in a dream, and once more kangaroos bound in slow, great curves down the hills, and gay parakeets squabble on the ground, and the soft grey apple-gums slumber in the distance, and the fragrance of the wattles is wafted in the air.

2 *October*. If this Cornish day were always and everywhere October, then October would never be a month to breed melancholy in the heart, and I could enter into the rapture of De Régnier over this season of the year. It would, indeed, be pleasant to think of October as a month when, as to-day, the faint north-easterly wind is mysteriously languorous, and the sun burns hot even through misty clouds, and the dim sea has all the soft splash of summer, and from the throats of birds comes now and again a liquid and idle note which, they themselves seem to feel, has no function but the delight of mere languid contentment, and the fuchsia tree casts a pool of crimson blossoms on the ground while yet retaining amid its deep metallic greenery a rich burden of exotic bells, to last maybe to Christmas.

If this is indeed October as Nature made October, then we might always approach winter in the same mood as, if we are wise, we shall always approach death.

24 October. At the crowded concert this evening I found a seat at the back of the orchestra, and when a singer came on to sing the 'Agnus Dei' of Bach's *Mass in B Minor* I had the full view of her back, her dress, cut broad and low, fully showing her shoulder-blades. I thus saw that, though the movements of her arms were slight, yet as she sang the long-drawn-out sighs, rising and falling, of the 'Miserere,' the subdued loveliness of the music was accompanied by an unceasing play of the deltoid and trapezius muscles. It was a perpetual dance of all the visible muscles, in swelling and sinking curves, opening out and closing in, rising and falling and swaying, a beautifully expressive rhythm in embodiment of the melody.

One sees how it was that the Greeks, for whom the whole body was an ever-open book, could so train their vision to its vivid music (has not Taine indeed said something to this effect in his travel notes in Southern Italy?) that when they came to carve reliefs for their Parthenon, even to represent the body in seeming repose, they instinctively knew how to show it sensitive, alive, as in truth it is, redeemed from grossness by the exquisite delicacy of its mechanism at every point. People think that the so-called *danse du ventre* is an unnatural distortion, and in its customary exaggerations so it is. But it is merely the high-trained and undue emphasis of beautiful natural expression. Rightly considered, the whole body is a dance. It is for ever in instinctive harmonious movement, at every point exalted to unstained beauty, because at every moment it is the outcome of vital expression that springs from its core and is related to the meaning of the whole. In our blind folly we have hidden the body. We have denied its purity. We have ignored its vital significance. We pay the bitter penalty. And I detect a new meaning in the wail of that 'Miserere.'

*I December.* I so frequently notice among moral reformers—for the most part highly well-intentioned people—a frantic and unbridled desire to eliminate from our social world any form of ‘temptation.’ (One wonders how far this attitude may have been fostered by that petition of the Lord’s Prayer, ‘Lead us not into temptation,’ which, on the face of it, seems to support Nietzsche’s extravagant reaction against Christianity. Yet surely the Church has misunderstood that petition. Jesus himself faced the Tempter, and it is evident that he could not have so lacked insight into the soul’s secrets as to countenance the impossible notion of eliminating temptation from the world. It was the power to meet the Tempter and yet not be led into temptation—if this petition may be regarded as authentic—that he desired his followers to possess; and therein he was on the same side as Nietzsche.) No scheme is too extravagantly impossible to invoke in this cause. No absurdity but we are asked to contemplate it with a seriously long face if it is sanctified by the aim of eliminating some temptation from the earth. Of any recognition of temptation as the divine method of burning up the moral chaff of the world, not a sign!

The fact is that we cannot have too much temptation in the world. Without contact with temptation virtue is worthless, and even a meaningless term. Temptation is an essential form of that conflict which is of the essence of life. Without the fire of perpetual temptation no human spirit can ever be tempered and fortified. The zeal of the moral reformers who would sweep away all temptation and place every young creature from the outset in a temptation-free vacuum, even if it could be achieved (and the achievement would not only annihilate the whole environment but eviscerate the human heart of its vital passions) could merely result in the creation of a race of useless weaklings. For temptation is even more than a stimulus to conflict. It is itself, in so far as it is related to passion, the ferment of life. To face and reject temptation may be to fortify life. To face and accept temptation may be

to enrich life. He who can do neither is not fit to live.

He can indeed be sent to the Home for Defectives. That way lies perhaps the solution of our social problem. The pessimist may cry out at the size of the Homes that his fears portend. Yet, even at the worst, who will deny that it is better, beyond comparison better, that even only a minority of mankind should be free—free to develop in the sun and free to climb to the sky and free to be damned—than that the whole world should be made one vast Home for Moral Imbeciles?

31 March 1914. I wandered through the Palazzo Davanzati, delighted with the picture it presents of a reconstituted fourteenth-century Florentine house, as we may please to imagine to ourselves that its medieval inhabitants were accustomed to have it, even with the bed-clothes still on the beds and the wine still in the glasses on the table. It was almost deserted, but for a few English, and with a group of them in a farther room the attendant was absorbed in the task of earning a few supererogatory *soldi*. In the large hall was a young Englishman with his old mother. The Englishman, carelessly smoking a cigar, was lifting all the delicate objects for examination, strumming on the spinet, and generally assuming the lofty airs of the true-born Englishman outside England. His mother, from a little distance, turned round from time to time and anxiously remonstrated with him: 'You must not touch the things. It is forbidden.' He continued on his course imperturbably and silently. The old lady grew sarcastic: 'And you call yourself a Government official! What *will* they say?' At last came the slow and emphatic answer: 'I *don't* know and I *don't* care.'

It seemed to me a highly typical English answer. I realized that the great doings of the English in the world, for good or for evil, have been largely built up on a basis of not knowing and not caring.

17 June. There is no human soul in sight on this large expanse of breckland, nor likely to be all day long; far away indeed one faintly discerns here and there a human habitation but no indication of human life. So here among luxurious elastic hillocks we choose our place of repose. Here we may spread our simple meal, here we may discourse of the whole universe or read from the books we have brought, *Yang Chu's Garden of Pleasure* and *Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, books that seem to harmonize with each other and with our mood of the moment; the wise old Chinese philosopher of twenty-two centuries ago, renouncing nothing, yet seeking nothing, content with the concord between nature and the individual, with the possession of the absolutely essential things; and that series of marvellously variegated scenes from the European life of the fifteenth century—once attributed to the genius of Antoine de la Salle—scenes all the more true to life because distorted by no moral, and under the unfamiliar disguise of ancient manners bringing so vividly before us the same problems of human nature which perplex us to-day.

It is a warm day but soft. The warmth of the sun and the coolness of the air seem at this delicately poised moment of the year to alternate rhythmically in delicious harmony. Afar from the eyes of men, we are free to open our garments and so far as we will to fling them off, so that sun and air alike may play deliciously through on our flesh. Here is the atmosphere of Giorgione's 'Concert.' Here is the Wilderness of Omar Khayyám. Yet still it is England, and our jug of wine is ale and the larks furnish our music.

In a few days, among the crowds of London streets, this day will seem to both of us a dream that was never lived in the world.

18 June. It is a significant but at first sight a puzzling fact that the single surviving chapter of the philosophy of Yang Chu has come down to us embedded in the Taoist writings of Lieh Tzu. That is to say, that a disciple of Lao-Tze, the supreme mystic—so delicately

disdainful of the material and sensuous side of the world, so incomparable an artist in building the universe out of nothing—has been the sole means of handing to us across more than two millenniums the brief utterances of the great philosophical anarchist who carried to the extreme point the economy of philosophy, and taught that if we knew how to confine ourselves to the wise activity of the senses, the world would become a scene of perfect harmony, and of perfect joy, for all men.

It is puzzling, but only at first sight. For the mystic explanation of the universe is the ultimate explanation and the largest. The philosophy of Lao-Tze could not have been comprised within that of Yang Chu. But within the philosophy of Lao-Tze there is room for all the sensuous joyousness and all the cynical daring of Yang Chu. The conventional moralists, after the manner of their kind, from his own day even to ours, have viewed Yang Chu with almost unspeakable reprobation. His Garden of Pleasure has found its immortal refuge beneath the shield of Lao-Tze the mystic.

*22 June.* We have walked some two miles from Worstead, through country lanes, on pilgrimage to the fourteenth-century iron-work on the south door of Tunstead Church. Worstead, though its name is known wherever the English language is spoken, is to-day but a sleepy, straggling, almost deserted village around its boldly placed magnificent church, set in a frame of the most gorgeously poppy-stained fields that one may well find in England. Tunstead is a still more insignificant village, only inhabited by a few agricultural labourers, and its vicar leaves his work among the roses of his garden to fetch the very long and venerable key, the key of the south door, and with a glance, in these days of sacrilegious suffragettes, at the little bag my companion carries, he entrusts it to our keeping. As we approach the door a doubt almost begins to formulate itself. That iron-work—merely a boss for the handle, over the key-hole, and a spreading scroll-work of foliage in relief, so delicate and so consummate—can it really

be five centuries old and not of yesterday? But the growth of such a doubt is speedily checked. We do not live in a world where iron springs into life so simply and so exquisitely as here, with so careless a grace of immaculate perfection. There is nothing in it, its rising and drooping curves are spontaneous and effortless, and the sight of it, even the vision of it in memory, may yet well be an inspiring joy for ever.

Tunstead Church is not unworthy to be the home of the finest jewel of artistry in iron-work which England owns. The vicar is tirelessly seeking for funds to accomplish repairs and restorations, but at present one cannot easily find any church in England which is at the same time so full of antique beauty and so untouched. The fine rood screen of the fifteenth century, not to be compared for its paintings to the unparalleled screen at Ranworth a few miles away, is yet more typically English. And here is the platform for the rood still left standing aloft, level with the doorway in the arch, and the marks in the beam of the body and limbs of the rood itself are still as clear to see as though the crucifix had been torn down yesterday and not nearly four hundred years ago. Even more interesting, and new evidence of the perpetual originality of our English churches, is the raised stone platform, about a yard wide, extending across the east wall of the chancel, with a vaulted chamber beneath and a grating open to the steps leading to the platform on the north side and a door to the chamber on the south. No one knows what this platform was for. But the whole arrangement, as others have pointed out, was admirably adapted for mystery plays, with the grating as a trap-door to Hell, and the people of Tunstead perhaps anticipated my own opinion as to the virtues of a church as theatre.

That was long centuries ago. To-day the descendants of those people of Tunstead under whose eyes, probably by whose hands, perhaps by their brains, the daring and unique grace of this church developed, are a handful of agricultural labourers, only born to sow and to reap and to consume the perishing fruits of the earth.

14 August. *Sub tegmine fagi.* The sky is a cloudless blue and the breeze murmurs pleasantly through the leaves overhead and the butterflies chase one another idly and the doves coo at intervals and the stream pressed by the water-lilies is almost too languid to move beneath the heat. Perfect peace seems to rule the world and the reign of Heaven begun on earth.

I note these things and I note them with only sadness. For to-day, it is said, five nations are beginning to fight the greatest battle in the history of the world, and over the whole cradle of human civilization the Powers of Hell are let loose. *Vae victis! Vae victoribus!*

17 November. The Funeral Service of the Church of England, when it becomes poignant with personal memory, is surely an impressive rite. As a religious statement it may cease to evoke our faith. But as an affirmation of the boundless pride and humility of man it remains superb. When the priest walks before the coffin as it is borne towards the choir, and scatters at intervals those brave and extravagant sentences, we are at once brought face to face with the bared and naked forms of life and death. For the rhythmic recurrence of that bravery and extravagance only heightens the pungency of the interspersed elemental utterances in the rite, those pathetically simple gestures which impart to it beauty and significance, 'We brought nothing into the world and it is certain that we can take nothing out. . . . Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.' After all, it is hard to see how the solemnity of this final moment when life touches death, and a man at last vanishes from the earth's surface, could better be brought home in its central essence than by the splendid audacity of a rite which calls down the supreme human fictions to bear their testimony at the graveside to all their creator's humility and all his pride.

To me it has its double measure of solemn sadness. For to-day, maybe, that rite has in this Kentish graveyard for the last time been paid to any of the males of my house, who in centuries of old showed themselves so

faithful to its observance, and in beautiful old church-yards of Suffolk and of Kent counted it their high office to scatter the grace of this final mystery over so many human things that now are woven afresh into the texture of the world.

*Christmas Day.* It is said that the Great War has led to a revival of religion. One is almost inclined to believe it in this huge unfinished cathedral at the Pontifical High Mass to-day. The misty air softens the bare walls into homely beauty and the huge candles at the entrance to the choir flame slowly as though they had all eternity to burn in, and beautiful voices, liquid or deep, sweep through the air, bearing the sound of music that was made long ago, and of words that began in the early world, to a vast crowd which fills the place with its devotion and makes the old tradition still seem alive.

As the gracious spectacle of the Mass is unrolled before me, I think, as I have often thought before, how much they lose who cannot taste the joy of religion or grasp the significance of its symbolism. They have no faith in gods or immortal souls or supernatural heavens and hells, they severely tell us. But what have these things, what have any figments of the intellect, to do with religion? Fling them all aside as austerely as you like, or as gaily, and you have not touched the core of religion. For that is from within, the welling up of obscure intimations of reality into the free grace of vision. The Mass is a part of nature. To him who sees, to him who knows, that all ritual is the attempt to symbolize and grasp the divine facts of life, and that all the painted shows of the world on the screen of eternity are of like quality and meaning, the Mass is as real as the sunrise, and both alike may bring joy and peace to the heart.

When we have put aside those people who are congenitally non-religious and eternally excommunicate from the mystery of the world, I find that religion is natural to man. People without religion are always dangerous. For none can know, and least of all themselves, what volcanic eruptions are being subconsciously

prepared in their hearts, nor what terrible superstitions they may some day ferociously champion. It has been too often seen.

9 January 1915. 'French and German soldiers who had fraternized between the trenches at Christmas subsequently refused to fire on one another and had to be removed and replaced by other men.' Amid the vast stream of war news which nowadays flows all over our newspapers I chanced to find that little paragraph in a corner of a halfpenny evening journal. It seems to me the most important item of news I have read since the war began.

'Patriotism' and 'war' are not human facts. They are merely abstractions; they belong to the sphere of metaphysics, just as much as those ancient theological conceptions of Godhead and the Trinity, with their minute variations, for the sake of which once Catholics and Arians so gladly slew and tortured each other. But as soon as the sunshine of real humanity makes itself felt the metaphysics of patriotism and war are dissipated as surely as those of theology. When you have reckoned that your enemy is not an abstraction but a human being, as real a human being as you are yourself, why want to kill him any more than you want to kill yourself? Patriotism and war are seen for what they are, insubstantial figments of fancy which it is absurd to materialize and seriously accept.

So we see, too, how simply the end of fighting might be reached. We have but to bring men together as human beings, either in imagination or in reality, and they are prepared to violate all the abstract principles of patriotism and war, to break any rule of discipline, rather than kill one another. We see it is not much to ask. It has been achieved on a single Christmas Eve in men whose hatred of each other had been artificially excited to the highest pitch. Is it much to expect that one day this process will be extended on the world's fighting line until so many men have 'had to be removed' that there will be none left to replace them?

18 *January*. Of all living creatures none has within recent years become so vastly magnified to our human eyes as the mosquito. Once it seemed just a troublesome little pest that we carelessly crushed and looked upon as a characteristic drawback to the fascination of any hot climate. But now we know that to the mosquito has been given a greater part on the stage of the world's human history than to any other creature. Down the minute microscopic groove of its salivary gland, as Shipley lately puts it, 'has flowed the fluid which has closed the continent of Africa for countless centuries to civilization, and which has played a dominating part in destroying the civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome.'

Yet there is nothing in the world that seems more fragile to us or is in reality more beautiful than the mosquito. We have been almost as blind to the loveliness as to the deadliness of this fairy creature whose delicately alighting feet are unfelt by our rough skins. For its beauty is a function of its deadliness. Those huge emerald eyes on the dark background, those iridescent and transparent wings, the double-edged sword of its long tongue, the slender legs yet so mightily strong—all are needed to pierce swiftly and keenly and silently, with the maximum of force and of skill, the thick and heavily armoured epidermis of man. One notes, also, that it is only the female who is equal to this achievement, for her partner is harmless to the great human beast which is the mosquito's prey, and cultivates perforce a vegetarian diet.

So that if you would see all of Nature gathered up at one point, in her loveliness, and her skill, and her deadliness, and her sex, where would you find a more exquisite symbol than the mosquito?

20 *February*. I sat this morning in the Old Garden. The air was soft and misty, the snowdrops and the crocuses were all opening, on every hand the bushes were bursting out into tender greenish-brown spikes, from the throats of blackbirds in the trees there came

soft liquid notes, the song of serene gladness, of eternal peace. And I saw and heard and felt and knew in my heart that I was beneath the wings of the approaching spring.

I can scarcely believe that the day will ever come of such decay of years or such desolation of spirit that I shall cease to feel, as I feel to-day, as I have ever felt, at the approach of spring. For it seems to me that it is something deeper than my personal joy or even my personal consciousness. It is something more profound than personality, part of the life of the world, and one with the song of the birds, which is so calmly joyous, so essentially serene, because they seem to remember that first spring of the earth and to know that when they forget it the world shall end. So it is that they can be such fine artists of nature and leave everything out of their song save peace and joy and the eternal recurrence of life.

24 September. *Incessu patuit dea*, wrote Virgil. The special gait which suggests the goddess is not, indeed, nowadays, if ever, necessarily the outcome of any divine occupation, but more likely of servile duties. The possibilities of beautiful feminine gait were first revealed to me as a youth in two persons—one Cornish, the other Irish—I came across in Australia, and I recall the charming surprise of one of these, the Irishwoman with hieratic air, when I told her that I knew that as a girl she must have carried burdens on her head. When I first began to visit East Anglia I noticed the peculiar gait of the young women, not often to be seen in a recognizable form but, it seemed to me, characteristic when found, the expression of reserved energy combined with alert vitality, a naturally rapid walk yet not hurried, with long easy strides. Just now in the dusk, here at Brandon, as we were returning to our hotel, a young woman passed with the swift large stride of this walk, its natural soft footfalls, as of a tiger which had acquired respectable businesslike habits, and yet still bore the impress of the days that were past.

One cannot but wonder in what recesses of intimate energy, or in what remote racial experiences, the secret of the idiosyncrasies of walking may sometimes lie. For this is perhaps the ancient primitive English walk, that swift walk which foreigners noted centuries ago, and were puzzled to reconcile with English indolence.

*16 January 1916.* Someone has brought me a spray of mimosa. I inhale its peculiar odour, not a specially delightful odour, which suggests honey and bruised leaves and, underneath, a fibrous stringiness, yet to me it brings an enlarging thrill which is endlessly delicious. At once I am transported across the gulf of forty years. I see again the Australian springtime when these gracious, drooping, golden wattles are sprinkled over the vast expanse of solitary, undulating bush in the bright sunlight. I am among them once more at the threshold of the world, still with swelling hope and tremulous fear before the yet unopened door of life. All the wistful, penetrating, exhilarant fragrance of youth is in this spray of mimosa.

*30 March.* A woman has shown me a crude and unpleasant letter written to her by a man I had (with perhaps too much forgetfulness of psycho-analytic doctrine) imagined to be refined, and he has defended himself with the plea that 'to the pure all things are pure.' It is perhaps not an uncommon experience.

'To the pure all things are pure.' It may be the truth. But I sometimes wish St. Paul had stated that hazardous truth in another form and declared that to the impure all things are impure.

The sea receives much filth into its broad bosom, and beneath the vital action of sun and wind and a pervading antiseptic salinity, it is all transmuted into use and beauty and the invigorating breath of ozone. But some narrow and enclosed minds are not so much like the sea as like the sewer. I object to the sewer pretending to a virtue which is the prerogative of those minds only which are like the sea.

30 November. I hear that Sir Hiram Maxim is dead. That news recalls to mind my only personal impression of the man to whom we owe the deadliest of all the deadly machines which are now destroying the populations of Europe.

It was more than thirty years ago and we stood around Maxim as he explained the mechanism of his gun and demonstrated its marvellous qualities. I still see the mild and childlike air, so often marking the man of inventive genius, the modest yet well-satisfied smile, with which he deftly and affectionately manipulated his beautiful toy. As we looked on, one of us asked reflectively: 'But will not this make war very terrible?' 'No!' replied Maxim confidently. 'It will make war impossible!'

So it is the dreamers, the children of genius, who for thousands of years have been whispering into the ears of mankind that insidious delusion: *Si vis pacem para bellum*. Even the brilliant inventor who in the dawn of the Metal Age first elongated the useful dagger-like knife into the dangerous sword was doubtless confident that he had made war impossible.

9 February 1918. In one of my books I had occasion to mention the case, communicated to me, of a woman in Italy, who preferred to perish in the flames when the house was on fire, rather than shock her modesty by coming out of it without her clothes. So far as it has been within my power I have always sought to place bombs beneath the world in which that woman lived, so that it might altogether go up in flames. To-day I read of a troopship torpedoed in the Mediterranean and almost immediately sunk within sight of land. A nurse was still on deck. She proceeded to strip, saying to the men about her, 'Excuse me, boys, I must save the Tommies.' She swam around and saved a dozen of them. That woman belongs to my world. Now and again I have come across the like, sweet and feminine and daring women who have done things as brave as

that, and even much braver because more complexly difficult, and always I feel my heart swinging like a censer before them, going up in a perpetual fragrance of love and adoration.

I dream of a world in which the spirits of women are flames stronger than fire, a world in which modesty has become courage and yet remains modesty, a world in which women are as unlike men as ever they were in the world I sought to destroy, a world in which women shine with a loveliness of self-revelation as enchanting as ever the old legends told, and yet a world which would immeasurably transcend the old world in the self-sacrificing passion of human service. I have dreamed of that world ever since I began to dream at all.

*12 April.* It is one of the first days of spring, and I sit once more in the Old Garden where I hear no faintest echo of the obscene rumbling of the London streets which are yet so little away. Here the only movement I am conscious of is that of the trees shooting forth their first sprays of bright green, and of the tulips expanding the radiant beauty of their flaming globes, and the only sound I hear is the blackbird's song—the liquid softly gurgling notes that seem to well up spontaneously from an infinite joy, an infinite peace, at the heart of nature, and to bring a message not from some remote heaven of the sky or the future but the heaven that is here, beneath our feet, even beneath the exquisite texture of our own skins, the joy, the peace, at the heart of the mystery which is man. For man alone can hear the revelation that lies in the blackbird's song.

These years have gone by, I scarcely know how, and the heart has often been crushed and heavy, life has seemed to recede into the dimness behind, and one's eyes have been fixed on the end that crowns all. Yet on the first days of spring, and this spring more than those of the late years that passed over us, soft air and sunshine lap me around and I indeed see again the solemn gaiety of the tulip and hear the message in the blackbird's low and serenely joyous notes, my heart

is young again, and the blood of the world is in my veins, and a woman's soul is beautiful, and her lips are sweet.

*2 May.* I remember reading years ago, in I know not what sacred book of India, of a prophet of olden time who wandered about the country, like Jesus, accompanied by his disciples. Early one morning they were aroused by the muezzin from a neighbouring minaret calling to prayer. 'The Voice of God!' exclaimed a zealous disciple awaking the slumberers. It chanced that from one of them as he roused himself from sleep there broke as it were the sound of wind. 'And that also is the Voice of God,' said the teacher. Then the disciples turned and rebuked the Master, for it seemed to them that he spoke blasphemy. But he replied: 'The one sound and the other are but vibrations of the air. Both alike are the Voice of God.'

I have thought since of that profound utterance, so rich with symbolic meaning, of the wise old Moslem teacher of India. Men hear the Voice of God from the lofty towers where the muezzin stands. But as the mystic vision pierces deeper into the mystery of the world, it is seen that the divine is more truly manifested in the falsely so-called humble human things; the winds and the waters of the world are all passed through the human form and cannot be less admirable for their association with that exquisite mechanism. So it is, we see, that to the mystic the human becomes the divine, and the voice of winds and streams, here as elsewhere, is the Voice of God.

*17 May.* In the degree in which I have been privileged to know the intimate secrets of hearts, I ever more realize how great a part is played in the lives of men and women by some little concealed germ of abnormality.

For most part they are occupied in the task of stifling and crushing those germs, treating them like weeds in their gardens, which may indeed be stifled and crushed but will always spring up again unless they are

uprooted, and these plants can never be uprooted because they are planted deeply down, entwined with the texture of the organism.

So these people are engaged in a perpetual contest, a struggle of themselves against themselves, an everlasting effort to ensure that what they consider the higher self shall hold in check the lower self. Thereby they often attain strength of character. They are fortified for living. It can scarcely be said they are sweetened or enriched.

There is another and better way, even though more difficult and more perilous. Instead of trying to suppress the weeds that can never be killed, they may be cultivated into useful or beautiful flowers. The impulse that is selfish or perverse or harmful may in the end be so transmuted as to bring forth fruits meet for service or for science or for art, no longer a poison for him in whose heart they grow and for those who surround him, but a precious herb for the healing of the nations. Thus in place of hard and loveless struggle and the perpetual production of a barren and virtuous soil, there is the prospect of harmony in fruitfulness, a life that has been enriched and sweetened by what had else been its bane.

For it is impossible to conceive any impulse in a human heart which cannot be transformed into truth or into beauty or into love.

*28 August.* 'I hate books of emotion and sentiment. I never read them. But I love books of hard facts.' So writes a woman friend who is distinguished in imaginative literature.

Nowadays—though my friend is not younger than I am—that seems to me a youthful attitude. It is the child who is always wanting facts and perpetually desiring to know. Right that it should be so; it is a very necessary thirst, this thirst for facts, like the thirst for milk of the infant at the breast.

As one grows older one's attitude towards facts changes. One begins to see through them. So far from being hard they now seem remarkably soft, even

when one thinks one has, with much trouble, succeeded at last in finding them. The most baldly statistical facts are shifting every moment, and they are the most relatively solid of all facts; even when it seems not so, they are still susceptible of endlessly different interpretations. You can stick your fist through them at any point.

The only hard facts, one learns to see as one gets older, are the facts of feeling. Emotion and sentiment are, after all, incomparably more solid than any statistics. So that when one wanders back in memory through the field of life one has traversed, as I have, in diligent search of hard facts, one comes back bearing in one's arms a sheaf of feelings. They after all are the only facts hard enough to endure as long as life itself endures.

20 January 1919. I have often wished that some disciple of Jesus had proved a Boswell. To be able to catch the precise definite outline of that figure as it impressed itself on the eyes, to know how this man met the ordinary routine of daily life, what he said in casual intercourse, the tones of his voice, and all those little mannerisms of conduct which reveal so much—how nearer we should be brought to that unique person, and what a devastation so scandalous a Fifth Gospel would have wrought beforehand in the ranks of the orthodox! Still one knows they would save themselves by declaring that it was a blasphemous forgery.

I still wish for a Boswell of Jesus, but I realize now more than ever what a supreme work of art we already possess in the Gospels. That is not to say that the history of Jesus is a myth. The theory is scarcely credible. To suppose that the religion of Jesus differed from all the other religions which came into the world about that time—the religion of Confucius, the religion of Buddha, the religion of Mahomet—by crystallizing round a figure of the imagination, would be to confer on it a supreme distinction one would hesitate to recognize. Religion, like love in Stendhal's famous analogy,

must always crystallize round some twig of the tree of life. Apart from such aprioristic considerations, Binet-Sanglé—though the orthodox refuse to recognize his existence and the unorthodox cross the road to pass him by on the other side—seems to have placed Jesus on a pedestal of solid pathological human reality from which it will be hard to tear him down.

There was a real Jesus, impossible as it will ever be even for the concentrated vision of a Binet-Sanglé to discern all his features. Yet around that concealed human person it is really the imagination of man which has built up the lovely crystal figure we see. An innumerable company of men, who had a few of them seen Jesus and most of them only heard of him, aided in this task. Each threw into it his highest inspiration, his deepest insight, with the sublime faith—based on that deep human impulse, seen even in our dreams, to exteriorize our own feelings—that this divine moment of his own soul could only be the truthful expression of a Saviour and liberator of man.

It was the peculiar virtue of the personality of Jesus that all these inspirations and insights could adhere to it and draw together into a congruous whole. At the same time a reversed process was evidently in movement. All the facts of the hero's life, actual or alleged, and all his sayings, real or apocryphal, were sifted and filtered through the human imagination, so purged that not a single trivial, ignoble, or even ordinary crude unpleasing statement has come down to us. At once by putting in and taking out, with an art like that of the painter and the sculptor in one, under some rare combination of favouring conditions, the human imagination, out of the deepest impulses of the human heart, has unconsciously wrought this figure of Jesus, purified of dross and all gold, tragic in its sublimity and tremulously tender in its loving-kindness. So that now when I open and turn over with reverent joy the leaves of the Gospels, I feel that here is enshrined the highest achievement of man the artist, a creation to which nothing can be added, from which nothing can be taken away.

21 May. A friend showed me yesterday the rarely seen but often mentioned obscene *Sonnetti Lussuriosi* of Aretino, written to accompany the yet more noted *Figurae Veneris*, now lost save in bad copies, of Julio Romano, once accounted the first painter of his time. They seemed to me to be dull, and monotonous in their dullness, unworthy not merely of the high reputation of Aretino, *mezz' huomo et mezzo Dio*, but of the really sapid and vigorous pen of the scandalous friend of the noble Titian.

It may seem the correct and conventional thing to say when the question is of obscenity. Yet there need be no objection to obscenity as obscenity. It has its proper place in art as in life. The greatest writers have used it, Aristophanes, Dante, Chaucer, Rabelais, Sterne, even Shakespeare and even Goethe have sometimes been obscene. So also have the greatest painters, even Rembrandt, and the greatest sculptors down to Rodin. Nor must we, as some would have us, regard the obscenity of these great spirits as a stain to be pardoned and effaced; it is in the texture of their minds and their works, and that is why we must always resist any would-be 'expurgation.' To deny the obscene is not merely to fetter the freedom of art and to reject the richness of nature, it is to pervert our vision of the world and to poison the springs of life.

But the expression of obscenity alone can only be a satisfaction, and then but momentary, to the crudest and most childish mind. Obscenity only attains its true and full value when it is the means of attaining a deeper reality and a newer beauty. That is how the great masters have used it, and therein is their justification. Those who object to obscenity and yet have not realized this—even when they are so-called artists who wish to proclaim their own refined superiority yet thereby merely 'write themselves down' in the Shakespearian sense—have no right to lay their sacrilegious hands on the obscene.

I am indifferent to the obscenity of Aretino because I fail to see in it any insight into life or any unfamiliar

beauty. It impresses me no more than the achievement of small boys who chalk up solemn naked words in capital letters on street walls and then run away; and it seems to me a manifestation of like nature.

*6 January 1920.* Life is not worth living, I read to-day in a thoughtful article in a thoughtful journal, unless it is continued beyond death. I have read that statement so often. It seems to be an idea passionately cherished by so many people. Life is nothing to them, they think, unless they are to live for ever. Everything else in the world is born and blossoms and grows lovely and fades and dies. They must go on for ever! To feel like that is to feel an alien in the world, to be divorced from nature, to be to oneself a rigid and dead thing—for only such things persist, and even they undergo a constant subtle change—in a universe that is in magnificent movement, for ever and for ever renewed in immortal youth, where there is in a deeper sense no death because all death is life.

There must be strong reasons why that alien feeling is widespread among men. The result of tradition? No doubt, but of a tradition that goes far back in human history, even, it may be, in the history of earlier species of man than ours. The Mousterian, who so carefully buried his dead, must have felt the same. It is a faith like the faith of those who believed that the sun travels round the earth, a faith so firm that no tortures were too precious to bestow on those who refused to share it.

Yet the faith in the fixity of the soul, like the faith in the fixity of the earth, will not work out even as an ideal conception. One may leave aside the question of it as a fact. As a fact we should be ready to accept it when it came, while still affirming, with the dying Thoreau: 'One world at a time, if you please!' But as an ideal it is less easy to accept than these good people think. It is not merely that to live a full and rich life in this wonderful world, among these fascinating beings,

not even excluding human beings, and to fade away when—or better, before—one has exhausted all one's power of living, should surely be a fate splendid enough for the greatest. What has always come home to me is that with the dissolution of the body the reasons for desiring the non-dissolution of the soul fall away. If I am to begin a new life, let me begin it washed clean from all my defects and errors and failures in this life, freed from the disillusioning results of all my accumulated experiences, unburdened of all my sad and delicious memories. But so to begin a new life is to annihilate the old life. The new self would be a self that is not me: what has happened to me would mean nothing to it: what happens to it can mean nothing to me. ✓

Then again, it seems to me, and surely to many, that the supreme reason for desiring to live beyond this life is to rejoin those whom here we loved. But what would be left of them when we met again? It is the human presence of the beloved, the human weakness, the human tenderness, that are entwined round our hearts, and it is these that we crave to see and to touch again. But if they are gone—and could I be so cruel as to desire that they should be perpetuated for ever?—and if I myself no longer have eyes to see or hands to touch or a heart to throb, what can the beloved be to me or I to the beloved?

One may amuse oneself with supposing all sorts of powers of perception transcending our powers here; yet the more they transcend them the more surely they would destroy all that we now count precious, just as, it is most certain, whatever transcending powers we received on coming into the world have totally annihilated from our existence all knowledge of the powers we may or may not have possessed before we entered it.

So it seems to me that this ideal—regarded as an ideal and without reference to the question of fact, which we could deal with, if necessary, when the time came—testifies to the curious lack of imagination which, in other fields also, people so often display. When we look at it, calmly and searchingly, it fails to work out.

10 April. I spent an afternoon before leaving Paris at the old Hôtel de Biron where the almost complete work of Rodin is now admirably displayed. What here interested me most was the final development of his art in the last sculptures of his old age, because this was new to me; he had not reached that stage when I saw him at work in the little studio in a remote district of Paris, where at that time he sought seclusion, far from the showplace in the Rue de l'Université. These things have a distinct character of their own as a group. They are effaced, the details are smoothed out, as it were washed away by the action of running water, so that only the largest and simplest harmonies of line and form remain. The effect is well seen in 'Ariane' and the bust of Lady Warwick. It is really the same liquid quality—*morbidezza* they call it—which is now recognized as a trait of the Alexandrian School of Old Greek sculpture, and it gives so subtle a charm to that work; but Rodin has pushed it to an extreme which the Greeks would have thought inconceivable.

With this final development the large sweep of Rodin's art was completed. There was no further development possible. He began as a minute realist and in that early stage his work even caused offence because it was said to be merely photographic. Then, during the greater and most active part of his career, he developed his characteristic style of deliberate exaggeration, the heightening of natural proportions for the ends of art, the play of light and shade. Finally that stage, too, passed away, and this last period arrived of large simple masses, softened and alleviated of all semblance to reality, gliding into a vast dim dream.

Have not all the supreme artists tended to follow a like course? Not the lesser artists, the artists of talent, for they seem with the progress of years to be seeking ever further to emphasize the vision of the world which they set out to present. But look at Michelangelo, whose development among great sculptors we can best follow. In that little chapel in Florence devoted to the last stage of his art, one of the shrines of the creative human spirit,

we seem to see the marble itself bursting into life so significant because not completely disentangled out of the obscure depths of nature from which it draws that life.

But it is not only among artists in this medium that we find the same course of development. It is still clearer to see among painters. I think of the marvellous picture of Titian's old age at Munich in which the splendours of that master's earlier works are forgotten in the attainment of a subdued and clouded glory which rises to still greater heights. I think of Rembrandt, whose art reached its climax as it passed away in the golden haze which, to memory, seems to fill the Hermitage. I think of the fascinating pictures of Hals's old age at Haarlem which, in place of the superb bravura of his earlier years, have almost the semblance of awkward crudity, and yet, as I recall them, live with so vivid a power that I forget the work of his youth. I think of Turner, whose early genius of the earth, sober and sombre, leapt up to heaven at last in mist and flame: of Carrière—if he may be included in this noble company—who began so precisely and ended with those vast figures that seem to come to us out of the world of dreams.

Nor is it in painting only. It is so also in poetry. Look at the last plays of Shakespeare, so loose and undramatic, so flowing or so broken, so full of exquisite music of the spirit more than of poetic form, of a heavenly atmosphere refined beyond any that was ever breathed on earth and yet so humanly tender; or at Shelley, who completed a large cycle of art in a short time, and wrote at last, in the *Witch of Atlas*, only with water and fire; or, within a yet greater and yet shorter cycle, trace the evolution of the ideals of Keats.

The critics have always stumbled a little over this final phase of supreme genius. They used to think that Michelangelo's last work was unfinished. They still often think that what we must recognize in such a manifestation is lassitude, failure of energy, a weakening grasp of brain or hand. I am not sure that there is not an element of truth in such criticism. Only let us not

forget that it is the mark of high genius, less to display athletically titanic strength than to be able to use weakness to reach divine ends. That power, it may well seem to us, is supremely visible in the typical last phase of the highest genius. The artist has lost his early power of realistic grip, and with it lost also his early taste for such power. But he has lost it only to attain a wider and deeper and more symbolic mastery of the world. He no longer cares for the mere literal imagery of a scene he will leave so soon. But he cares more than he has ever before cared for its essence, and he is conscious of that essence with a delicacy of sensitive perception he never before possessed. He is no longer concerned with things; they are receding from his view. As he rises above the earth, like Elijah in his chariot of fire, he now sees it only in the distance. Henceforth he no longer deals with things. It is the soul of things that he brings before us. That is why his later work fascinates us endlessly as, slowly, after many years, enlightened by the long course of our own experience, we begin at last to understand what it means.

14 May. 'How is Religion still possible?' This question is posed by so able a thinker as Dr. Merz as the question of paramount importance, and he can only find a paradoxical answer.

It is a question which still seems to be taken seriously by many otherwise intelligent persons who are thereby stranded in the end on all sorts of hidden sandbanks. They do not ask: How is walking still possible? They do not ask: How is hunger still possible? Yet it is really the same kind of question.

It is always marvellous to find how people worry themselves over unnecessary problems and spin the most fantastic webs of abstruse speculation around even the simplest things. Religion, if it is anything at all, must be a natural organic function, like walking, like eating, better still, one may say, like loving. For the closest analogy, and indeed real relationship, of religion, is with the function of reproduction and the emotions of

sex. The functions of walking and eating are more or less necessary to life in their rhythmic recurrence, and it is legitimate in their absence to endeavour to stimulate them into action. But the function of religion, like that of love, is not necessary to life, nor may it with any certainty be stimulated into activity. Need it? These functions are either working within you or they are not. If not, then it is clear that your organism is in no need of them at the present moment, and perhaps is born without the aptitude to experience them. And if so, there are those who will tell that you represent a superior type of humanity. Therefore whether if not so, or whether so, why worry?

I do not, indeed, myself think that the inaptitude for the function of religion—ancient as the religious emotions are—represents a higher stage of development. But I am sure that either the function is there or it is not there, and that no intellectual speculations will take its place or hasten its manifestation. Religion, like love, develops and harmonizes our rarest and most extravagant emotions. It exalts us above the commonplace routine of our daily life, and it makes us supreme over the world. But, like love also, it is a little ridiculous to those who are unable to experience it. And since they can survive quite well without experiencing it, let them be thankful, as we also are thankful.

*6 August.* The train stopped for a long time—for everything here is uncertain now—at Kenmare, and a girl of some sixteen years stood on the platform near our third-class compartment, a simple country girl. When she turned her face towards us I saw the most dazzling and heavenly eyes that I have ever seen anywhere in the world. They were blue, and their quality of almost abstract loveliness was immensely enhanced by rather thick black eyebrows. When those wondrous eyes were directed towards one, all the rest of her form seemed to become invisible. It was only when she turned aside that I was able to observe that, apart from this rare combination—it used to be called the Celtic type by

anthropologists, but I have seen it nowhere else so pronounced in the south of Ireland—she was just a simple pleasant brown-haired girl, and not, as it seemed when one gazed at those eyes, a visitant from some other sphere.

She evidently noticed my admiring gaze, and she leisurely entered our compartment, with her little packages and a newspaper. But she was shy. She glanced for a few moments at her paper and then she stood up and looked out of the further window. The next station, Kilgarvan, was hers, and the platform was on our side. It was my privilege to open the door for her. She murmured a shy 'Thank you' and swiftly disappeared. But the memory of those eyes will always remain.

*19 November.* When I was living in Athens I could see, well framed by my window, above the sculptured buildings of University Street, the chapel-crowned height of Lycabettos. It is the only imposing height close to Athens, but the Greeks, who loved little things, made much of the Acropolis and of still more insignificant rocks and hillocks around, and scarcely seem so much as to have seen Lycabettos, which they were content to leave for the purpose of astronomical observation. So that when I went to Athens it came upon me with surprise that I had, it seemed, never so much as heard the name of the only real Athenian hill.

I soon learned to love Lycabettos better, and feel more at home there, than any place else in Athens. One has a fine view from that height over the city and sea and distant mountains. And one is at peace, and free to enjoy one's own society. For though an eccentric native may sometimes find his way up there, the ordinary practical Greek—evidently in this respect, at all events, at one with the Greek of antiquity—sees no reason whatever for wasting his time by laboriously climbing up a hill that leads nowhere. Moreover, Lycabettos in various of its characteristics singularly reminded me of Cornwall, and as I reclined through the day on its

slopes, beneath the pleasant March sunshine of Attica, with my papers and my books, I would often pause to dream of ancient lost days in Cornwall.

Now, after an interval of five years—a short interval, it may seem, but long enough to bridge eternity—I am really once more in Cornwall. It is not, indeed, the Cornwall that I knew, this northern stretch of coast depending on Padstow, but a Cornwall with various new shades of difference. Here the rock is slate, so that Nature plays at being a Cubist—as the artist friend I am staying with here cannot fail to note—and builds up the cliffs with random oblong striated blocks, polished black or dun in colour, now and then veined with marble or splashed with yellow lichen. The cliffs are soft, of friable and more recent shale, but slate is ancient and hard (as those know who have ever sought the remains of their ancestors in old churchyards and been lucky enough to find them beneath inscribed tombs of slate), so that all sorts of fantastic rock shapes and rock bridges and porched caves, in what Pepys would have called the 'romantic' style, may here be found as nowhere else in Cornwall. At all events I do not know where else the rocks are so hard, or the cliffs so rugged, or the waves that beat against rocks and cliffs, to break in such varied clouds of spray even when the sea seems calm, so endlessly attractive to watch.

Now is the time of year when Cornwall has often seemed to me loveliest. The air is soft, inspiring to spirit as well as to lungs. The sun is warm, and as long as it stays in a cloudless sky I, too, can stay here, feeling my cheeks tingle with its chemical warmth as I write. Now, too, the butterfly visitors of the summer season have long since all fluttered away, and since there are few inhabitants here, and no railway or other method of public locomotion within five miles, I may count all the splendour of the coast my own and wander about for hours without seeing a single person, scarcely a sign even of civilization, so that I must sometimes remove my shoes and socks to cross a stream because there is neither ford nor bridge.

Yet, while this region has its own traits, it is still, as I know in my nerves and see with my eyes, the Cornwall with which the greater part of my active life on earth has been inextricably blended. As I recline on the untouched sands and the waves creep up towards my feet, influences come out of the past to wrap me round and round. I am within the circle of a sacred halo iridescently woven of sadness and joy, of tenderness and peace.

*23 December.* The wind has been blowing a stiff gale from the west all night and sudden squalls have swept in now and again. This morning the wind has dropped and the sky for a while is blue. But the sea is still alive; her pulse beats mightily from the sting of the wind's kisses. Her body is still restless and writhing, her limbs far flung. Not to-day, as so often, is she sending in the slow solemn ranks of rollers to curve smoothly and break delicately as they come to land. To-day the waves rush in swiftly in great irregular masses, falling to pieces in their haste, to clash and melt in one another, or rise as they unite in a spasm of inverted cascades. Nearer in, the turbulent swift irregular waves crash wildly against the rocks in infinite variety of living motion, or roll back in some strangely irregular step of the dance-measure to leap into each other's arms, and then to bound on with renewed energy; and here mountains of foam arise as some huge boulder is struck; and here delicate whiffs ascend a few feet only, resting in the air long enough for the eye to catch the outline of their beauty; and here the foam mounts and spreads like a huge hand closing tenderly all over some slope of rock, inserting its fingers lovingly into every cranny. And now, as the tide sweeps nearer, the exuberant foam is everywhere leaping in great joyous white flames on to the cliffs, and again I see it surging up even beyond the dark high hill that shuts off the next inlet of the sea, even where the hill becomes a green slope, leaping in spires, amid vaster masses of foam, a cloudy exhilarating mist which floats softly towards me, while a low deep

rumbling bass seems to furnish the pivot on which the wild fugal dance turns in harmonious rhythm.

So it is to-day. So it was in days long aeons before any of the things that we in our narrow sense call living moved on the earth. The waves clasped one another then with just as joyous love. There was life and there was play and there was art and there was music and dance. The same words would fit the waves then that we apply to our most admired beings of human flesh. But there was none to mark. So by some stress of unconscious desire Nature created her little mechanical living toys that could see and feel. It seemed not enough, so she created Man, who could not only see and feel but know, realizing the world from outside, as she realizes it, incorporating her Godhead of the Seventh Day. Therewith her desire was fulfilled and there was nothing more to do. Nature has had her whim. There was not so much in it after all. And she had to pay for it. Man proved a dangerous plaything. Only one problem remains: How to dispose of him?

She will solve the problem some day. On that day the sea will still come rolling in with the same joyous life and the same bright beauty. But once a creature stood here who saw and felt and knew that beauty. It will have been enough.

*12 March 1921.* Last week, when I was feeling, as ever since I left Cornwall I have felt, singularly firm against assault, Death, in his casual tentative indifferent way, just gave me a torturing prick with his scythe as he passed by, leaving me alive but bleeding. Ever since I lie on my back invalid, for the first time in my active life, and whether he is likely to come again soon there is none to tell me.

Yet, I find, I remain serene, even continuously cheerful. For some years past I have accommodated my arrangements to Death and guided my activities accordingly, even though I may not yet have completed everything I had planned as the minimum—for I am

content the maximum should go—of my Day's Work—my Day's Play—in the world. Without rest yet without haste—it is the law of my nature which I have no intention of changing now. My faith has carried me through so far and will accompany me to the end. Death is the final master and lord. But Death must await my good pleasure. I command Death because I have no fear of Death, but only love.

*17 March.* From time to time, at long intervals, she would drift into my room, like a large white bird hovering tremulously over the edge of a cliff, a shy and sinuous figure, so slender and so tall that she seemed frail, yet lithe, one divined, of firm and solid texture. I speak of her as a woman, yet she was in a sense beyond the distinction of sex, at once a married mother and an adolescent virginal youth, and these two together, not by any inharmonious clash, but lifted into the higher unity of a being who belongs to another race.

Yet let it not seem that at that time I made any observations so definite as these. This was still an altogether unknown instrument that was from time to time placed within my reach, as yet a meaningless instrument on which I could scarcely strike a random casual note. I hardly even sought to. I was, as ever, incurious, always content to wait for the revelation the Gods may in their grace bring me, just as I have waited for years, consciously or unconsciously, before the paintings or the poems of some great master, who was meaningless to me, until by little glimpses of vision, by sudden flashes of intuition before my purged eye, the Flame of Beauty at last was bared. For I would say with Plotinus that it is the business of the Gods to come to me and not for me to go to them. Thus it was then; and when I look back to those days I seem only able to recall in detail the intellectual brows, a little ascetic, they seemed, above that long waving form, and an occasional ripple of laughter, a shallow ripple, like the little sudden shudder that passes over the surface of a solemn pool of water among the rocks

at low tide, touched by a quick breath of wind from the sea.

So it was that slowly only and by imperceptible degrees I learnt to see and to evoke by touch the mystery of this new Revelation that the Gods had brought to my humble door. It was a memorable step in the unfoldment when, one unexpectant day, the tall figure rose and approached and I felt cool kisses, like the rich petals of some tea-rose, falling softly on my face, amid murmured words, and the rustle of long cool limbs for a moment gliding gently around my own. Therewith the slow process of my awakening was touched into sudden acceleration, the vague images that had been aroused in my mind began to crystallize; there was a new keenness of vision in my eyes and a new sensitiveness of touch in my hands. For the first time I knew clearly that this was a Person, of whatever nature and from whatever far world visitant, a Person, not only a gracious wreath of soft shy mist, for concealed beneath there was a massive, even rugged frame and a latent power of strong impulse that was new to itself as to me. So I grew alert and reverent, ready to worship whatever Divine Image I might be able to discern through earthly envelopes.

It cannot have been long after that day, I began to perceive something even in the manner of the garments of this Person different from the women I had known in the world. Her clothing was not something closely and firmly enswathing a loose body, with difficulty found and disentangled, and when found mostly featureless and insignificant. There was a certain rarity and distinction, an individual impress, in the few garments that she wore; yet personal as they were, one realized that they were not part of her, they seemed to fall away at a touch, she seemed able to glide out of them with no effort. The Person to whom these garments belonged, however shy and shrinking in a cold and alien world, might thus be native to a world where clothing was a grace of living, rather than an essential art of living, and the body itself too full of meaning, and

itself too full of mystery, to need garments or to bear being garmented. I dimly divined this as I caught careless entrancing glimpses of this body.

I well remember the day on which it was first altogether revealed to me. Day indeed it scarcely was any longer. Twilight had come, the light without shadows when all familiar things grow mysteriously unfamiliar, the light in which alone we can imagine that immortal forms of sculpture might become soft and flexible and warm. I lay back on my couch, the curtains of the windows were still parted and a bright light from afar made a clear pattern on the wall. We talked of I know not what grave things in art or in life, and as we talked she rose from the depths of her chair and, it seemed by scarce an effort of disentanglement, floated into my sight without a single garment left to veil the soft radiance of her form. The room was full of diffused light, yet so softened and dimmed that that illusion of night was present which ever imparts strength and assurance to women and maybe to angels. Yet this illusion of night was no more than the atmosphere made visible, in which this lofty Person shone not only in clear outline, but with all due variations of bright tone and gloom of shaded recesses. All the natural saliences of form were subdued. The shallow inverted bowls of the breasts were of a virginal shape astonishing to see, the firm belly no less, and only the little trace of a droop in the tender globes behind somehow indirectly suggested the touch of maternal fatigue. There was in this length in body and legs yet a measured and rightful proportion, so that one was reminded of those supreme Egyptian artists who—perhaps inspired by the neighbouring Dinka folk who are of all human people the most extravagantly and beautifully excessive in limb—drew upon their temple walls such divinely tall and slender gods and men. Yet here was no schematically fantastic caricature. There was the tender, almost pathetic breath of life emanating from her, emanating almost, one imagined, in fragrance, yet but imagined, for it was only by intimate contact that one might

know or divine the scent and the taste of the mysterious salts and essences that distilled from the guarded places of her form and helped to suggest the firm underlying structure beneath a shape that at first glance seemed so ethereal, befitting large appetites and a great thirst for water and for wine, those two things which of all things that enter the human body have a significance, in purity and in hilarity, which is more than human and enable the human to drink of sources which are divine because alone they remain immortally incorrupt. So the vision before me was signed with the mark of an origin that seemed yet more hieratically remote than any racial sources to which her human kin bore witness.

In the human people we know, the mingling of race that must ever be present seems often to bring a clash and conflict of tendency in spirit, and almost it seems in body, a conscious struggle of higher and lower, an ever-present awareness of a bit in the mouth, and invisible ancestors who draw the reins to this side and to that even at the same moment. It never seemed so to me in this Person. Even as in her form the virginal and the maternal were marvellously united into a harmony of adolescent youth, so it was in her spirit. The strange discrepancies of her soul lay peacefully side by side, the lion by the lamb. The thin austere lines upon her intellectual brows were the outward sign of a subtle brain that played among the glistening points of glacier heights, pursuing there delicate fancies of imagination that often seemed almost to elude perception, and wrought our human speech into harmonies as of stalactites of icicles grouped amid the rocks of the cliffs when a frost follows rain. Yet, without any violence of transition, she would linger maliciously over the stories of human weakness and brood deliciously over licentious images, until lascivious pearls of sweat gathered together in the sheltered recesses of the prostrate form lying passive, without movement, for the energy of passion is human and belongs not at all to those beings who seem to us to bear about their forms and their spirits something of the semblance of

Eternity. Human creatures, when they are most human, distinguish between good and evil, they strive after the good, they seek to avoid the evil, it is even their desire to trample down their worse self and on that ruin to raise a better. In the perpetual effort of such moral struggle, in the desire, even though it prove vain, to give of itself to other ends, their human nobility lies. But to Heaven all things are fair. Nature and the Gods are no more evil than they are good; moral nobility is not for them. 'I am what I am': it is their perpetual affirmation, not, it need be, arrogantly, nor yet, it need be, meekly, yet always without struggle.

'I am': that always seems to the human mind the affirmation of the Most High, yet it is an affirmation out of a sphere in which there is neither high nor low in our human sense, just as we see there neither good nor bad. When that is realized, we have gained the deepest insight into the Divine that the years can bring us, we no longer rate too highly or too lowly what man has blindly reverenced as God or contemned as Nature. Like Arethusa or some immortal Nymph of the ice and the water, this mysterious Person appeared to me, sometimes in the silence, as it were, of glacial mountain heights, and sometimes on the lowlands of robustly gushing or gently rippling water. Yet there was no spiritual sense in which either the one or the other was truly high or truly low. There came before me the symbolically significant vision, the physical or the spiritual vision, in which this profound reality was made manifest and this lofty Person was revealed under an aspect which seemed the incarnation of that living and profuse Nature which is neither high nor low. The tall form languidly arose and stood erect, taut and massive it seemed now with the length of those straight adolescent legs still more ravishing in their unyielding pride, and the form before me seemed to become some adorable Olympian vase, and a large stream gushed afar in the glistering liquid arch, endlessly, it seemed to my wondering eyes, as I contemplated with enthralled gaze this prototypal statue of the Fountain of Life, carved

by the hands of some daring and divine architect, out of marble like flesh, that marble which has in its texture the mingled warm and matt tones of human flesh, mortal and immortal at once, motionless and passive, yet of wondrous energy, the image of creative arrogance; while on the firm austere lines of the face one read, not pride, but a shy and diffident smile, the fear lest to the merely human spectator that which is transcendent should be mistaken for what is gross.

Yet there is no language for mortals to whom are vouchsafed brief moments of intuition into the reality of a world which for all the daily purposes of life is merely a dull show fittingly expressed in dull words, nor are there any images to express meaningly to men what comes into the mind when slowly one by one the scales have fallen from our eyes and we nakedly glimpse, once or twice or thrice on our course through the world and most of us never at all, one of those rare divine beings who pass veiled and disguised through life, as in medieval days the old forsaken gods of Greece and Rome were said still to linger here and there in the world, with a cowl drawn over their flaming eyes, or a rough kirtle deforming the symmetry of their perfect limbs.

Before the inner eye of those who are drowning, they say, there pass in procession the significant visions of all their lives. As I lie here, floating back to life, there pass before my inner eye from among the pictures of those rare and lovely persons that here and there it has been given me as my supreme grace in the world to discern and to know, not those that are from long ago mine, closest and most tender, but this mysterious revealing Person, surrounded with a halo of silence and parted by half the world's space.

13 April. In an anonymous but admirable article on Baudelaire I find *Les Yeux des Pauvres* casually referred to as 'the most cynical of all his cynicisms about love.' The remark strikes me because I am always a little sceptical—I will not say cynical—over the use of that word 'cynical,' even when applied to

the animal from which it is ostensibly derived, and I doubt if I have ever myself used it quite seriously. I even suspect that, like the word 'asinine,' it is a sad revelation of human nature.

Let us see. In *Les Yeux des Pauvres* the poet imagines himself seated with his mistress before a new and splendid café, glasses and decanters in front of them, when he becomes aware of a poor man holding two small children by the hands, and all three gazing into the attractive establishment. The poet is seized by a feeling half of pity, half of shame, and turns for sympathy to the beautiful eyes of his companion. But she merely remarks: 'Can't we have those tiresome people sent away?' 'So incommunicable is thought,' the poet reflects, 'even between people who love each other.'

Now there are women of that sort; we all know them; and they bear stamped clearly all over them the nature of the material of which they are made. No need to 'love' them to find out what that material is; it may be discerned at the outset. There are women, also, of another sort. I have known them and loved them well, women whose native impulses of tenderness and of help have leapt to feeling and perhaps to action before my own reflections of pity or of shame have had time to take shape. The poet has chosen, or is pleased to represent himself as having chosen, a woman of the other sort. His obtuse perception therein has been perfectly mated with her obtuse emotions, and he is so foolish as not to be able to see the resultant harmony. So on this occasion 'cynicism' is merely the failure to recognize that one has been foolish. Need we debase a good old Greek word to express anything so commonplace?

20 June. They are covered with honour. Men treat them with respect, women fall in love with them, ribbons and medals are pinned on their coats, nations are ready to starve to provide them with lifelong pensions, they are encouraged — as we see this day — to

form associations to demand for themselves all the best-paid posts in life and the dismissal of all others, women especially, now in employment.

And who are these heroes? They are the men, to whatever nation belonging, who were willing to be driven like sheep at the bidding of military imperialists in order to blast the world, who flung aside that personal responsibility which might be the divine prerogative of their species, cheerfully becoming machines to slaughter, loot, rape, and crush into nervous impotence every living thing within their reach, who have by their presence killed the sweetness and fruitfulness of every spot of earth they have swarmed over, and therein destroyed every achievement of human skill that could be destroyed, who have come near to undoing all the effortful attainments of graciousness and civility the ages had slowly wrought, who have made all life, so far as their hands could touch it, on the side they fought for as much as on the side they fought against, something fouler than Dante ever fabled of Hell—these are the creatures, slaves of slaves, mere clay in the hands of phrasemongers, who are the Heroes of Man.

O Man, sublime in dreams, pitiful in real life, august in the creation of ideals, lower than an idiot in the face of the real world, O pitiful Man, leave the world alone to be lived in by those who know how to live; be content to dream.

But there is no one left to apostrophize Man nowadays. It would be too rhetorical, it would not suit the mealy-mouthed good breeding of our time. Like Agag we must go delicately, and meekly be hewn in pieces.

*5 September.* 'And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us.'

Jesus has been called, I believe, the greatest master of irony who ever lived, and surely there can never have been a greater triumph of irony than the statement so gently insinuated into this petition, and now perpetually repeated by millions, even during the Great War. Millions, who genuinely believed that the

Germans had 'trespassed' against them, and were still more genuinely occupied in torturing, starving, murdering, and speaking ill of those trespassers, in the intervals of these occupations meekly mumbled in all our churches, as they echoed the brazen voices of their governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters: 'And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us.'

We have no Jesus now, nor any Rabelais, to do justice to these wonderful fellow-countrymen of ours, and their dear brethren in other belligerent lands of the War. Besides, it must be a painful subject. It cannot be pleasant for them to realize that, when they reach that next world they so devoutly believe in, the rest of Eternity will have to be spent in the enjoyment of that 'forgiveness' they so liberally bestowed on the Germans.

I am more concerned to know what is wrong with a petition which has long been accepted without protest. And that surely is that the petition is reversed, in the Oriental manner, and that when set right end up it has really a beautiful and helpful meaning. I suppose that 'God,' to whom the petition is addressed, is the name for one's own highest self, since it is evident that no legitimate prayer can ever be answered except one's own best self consents to the answer. To ask that one's own higher self should forgive one's own trespasses is the hardest prayer to answer that we can ever offer up. If we can breathe this prayer, and find it truly answered in a harmony of exalted comprehension and acceptance, then we have learnt what forgiveness is. There is no other way to learn forgiveness. We cannot forgive others in any comprehensible sense unless we have first learnt how to forgive ourselves. So this petition should read: And may we forgive those who trespass against us, As we forgive our own trespasses.

*13 October.* I was wandering to-day about Kew Gardens in the warm sunny air of October days that this year are a perpetual miracle, wandering about to

gaze at random at the endlessly variegated and fantastically extravagant plants brought together here from the ends of the earth.

Every plant is absurd. It is even more plain to see, since one is oneself an animal, that every animal is absurd. Moreover, in its absurdity is demonstrated its rationality, for by its absurdity it lives. Every plant, every animal, is, from an evolutionary point of view, a caricature of the genus it has, on reasonable grounds, departed from, while yet retaining to it a recognizable resemblance. Man is the supreme absurdity because he is so poignantly aware of these recognizable resemblances to the other animals of his Family Group. He has to spend most of his life in training himself to try not to recognize them; and civilization is Man's hopeless effort to cover up and conceal those traits of himself which he regards as specially animal-like. At some moments, when his antics become peculiarly wild, as during the Great War and after, he seems dimly to perceive his own absurdity, but those moments are rare.

Thus Absurdity and Reason are inextricably intertwined into the structure of what we call Life, while yet remaining eternally distinct, and each only to be clearly seen while the other remains dim or unseen. So there arises a problem for every one who desires to see the world truly and to see it whole. That involves the harmonization of two discordant attitudes, for he who takes up one alone of these attitudes, whichever it may be, remains only half a human being. If he is only able to enjoy the absurdity of the world as a Spectacle, or if he is merely occupied in solemnly striving to mould and cement it by Reason, he is, in either case, a good half-man, but only a half-man. How to be at the same time both? I have always been preoccupied with this problem. For only the rarest great spirits have achieved it, Rabelais, Goethe, possibly Shakespeare had he lived longer. To be the serene spectator of the Absurdity of the world, to be at the same time the strenuous worker in the Rationalization of the world—that is the function of the complete Man. But it remains a very difficult task, the supreme task in the Art of Living.

17 October. The way you make the creature if you are God—or whatever one may choose to call It—is as follows: After well mixing, stirring, and chopping up, you form a tube of two layers of cells and allow them to adhere to each other to form a third. So you have a sack for absorbing food from the circumambient water or air—being careful to leave one or two little holes—and for thereby growing; all the rest follows in time; the outer layer puts forth a sensory and motor nervous system to aid in the nourishing process, and the whole sack puts forth four limbs which gradually elongate and enable the sack to push itself towards the most attractive food streams. Then you place it on its two hind-limbs so that it may swing from one on to the other and so be able to move more rapidly towards its food, as well as to seek after or run away from its fellow-creatures, and generally to debase the face of the earth and destroy all other living things, animal or vegetable, while its two fore-limbs may be used to grab its food and to embrace or to kill its fellows, but both embracing and killing are of less urgent and constant importance to the creature than the work of placing all sorts of foods and drinks within that voluminous tube which is its primary central self and converting them, by a never-ending process which is the fundamental business of its life, into excretions, a process of such supremely sacred importance that the creatures rarely perform its final phase in public and there is nothing they speak of less, so that even around their kings and queens at banquets, in the days when kings and queens were great, at the moments when the final acts of digestion were accomplished a screen was placed to conceal the dazzling splendour of that vision. The incidental by-play of this central function ran into the strangest directions. The curiosity of these beings reached even to the stars, and the world itself could not always fill their hearts. Nothing was so small or so large, so common or so fantastic, as not sometimes to seem worth while to them. That is why this afternoon I see around me, close packed and wrapped in the most variegated rags, a great concourse of these beings, assembled in a hall

to listen to one of themselves, one Chaliapin, as he sings the songs which once were the howls of lust and pain and joy in primitive forests.

Fiddling work to make men and women. And little credit to be had out of it. For they are attractive only to each other—when even that—but for all other creatures on earth a terror, save only those which are still in the first unhappy stage of ignorance concerning them and those that have long been enslaved to them. The creatures that stand close below them can only suffer and die from that contact. And the creatures that are to stand above them, and will some day in their turn crush them out, are not yet arrived. Meanwhile the God that made This Thing hides his shameful face and can nowhere be found.

*21 December.* Week after week, week after week, there is nothing to jar the placid routine of life in this remote spot. In front is always the sea and the deep continuous murmur of its surge, now and then lashed into a roar by the wind which then, too, mingles its shriek in the music, and at night, in the trees behind, sometimes the soft and comforting tu-whoo of the owl. In the evening one sits on the little veranda and looks down on the valley below as it opens to the cove; and the sprinkled little cottages, as twilight falls, one by one show forth the softly gleaming lights of their windows through the gloom, gentle reassuring light-houses, while behind the heights on the right, a mile afar, the real Lizard Light slowly revolves its great solemn flame to sweep across the sky and search the sea beneficently for those who need illumination upon the dangerous track.

I have never lived so near that light before. But all my life, it almost seems, the Lizard Light has formed part of the familiar background of my mind. As a child I knew it for the last southerly point of England which one sadly left behind to flicker out as one plunged into the broad Atlantic. Again, years later, still on the threshold of the world, in days that were full of great and tremulous hopes, from the attic window of my

room at Lamorna, for me a hallowed spot such as Rousseau desired to surround with a balustrade of gold, I could see afar the sweet and inspiring gleam of the Lizard Light. Now, at last, when I please myself with thinking that life is over, for the first time I dwell close beside it.

A lighthouse is one of the most beautiful things of man's creation on land, and so worthy to mate with a ship, which is one of the most beautiful things anywhere. At all events they were so once. In later times men have had less care to see to it that beautiful things should really seem beautiful. When one has seen the modern Lizard Lighthouse one has no special wish to give it a second glance. But see Smeaton's old Eddystone Lighthouse, re-erected on Plymouth Hoe, and the one lovely thing in that town, a finely wrought dream with its exquisite curves and its delicate lantern.

The lighthouse is still a beautiful symbol as it once was a beautiful reality. It stands for the supreme function of Man on earth, and of each one of us within the radius of his own small circle. To transform the spirit of love into light that shall illuminate the night of life for those who pass darkly through it—that is the function of the lighthouse, and the humblest human glow-worm who is merely true to himself is instinctively doing just that.

So as I watch the little casements in the valley below grow bright, and as the huge beam of the Lizard revolves behind the heights, I softly repeat to myself those words of Coleridge's which so often linger in my mind, as once in the mind of one who is no longer near me seeking to embody them: 'I am not fit for public life, yet the light shall stream to a far distance from the taper in my cottage window.'

18 January 1922. Among the men of to-day there are many who cherish, or at all events believe that they cherish, a profound antagonism to Beauty. They are repelled by it, they are suspicious of it, they have no impulse to seek after it. There is something else, they seem to feel, better worth admiring and seeking after.

Quite natural! I am tempted to exclaim. The generation that made the Great War was trained up in Ugliness and it is natural that they should make Ugliness their God. One must respect their devotion. For my own part, I am inclined to say, I am well content that it should be so. If in this matter there is one thing I above all dislike, it is that the shrine at which I worship should be profaned by the hoofs of the herd.

But that would not only be too Pharisaic an attitude, as of old they would have termed it, but also too superficial. For those to-day who think they condemn Beauty are merely suffering — as so many do in our world—from the weakness of their muddled heads. It is not the things that are beautiful they are turning from; it is the things that have ceased to be beautiful. And that is a very different matter. In every age—it is nowhere seen more clearly illustrated than in the history of our own poetic literature during the past three centuries—convention and the usage of dull formality are ever wearing away what is beautiful in speech. In every age the pioneer is called upon to penetrate daringly into the unknown and capture new shapes of loveliness, even though in doing so he cannot fail often to bring back what is trivial, banal, extravagant, absurd. It has always been so. That is why Cowley is so significant a figure in our literature; however hidden his inestimable service may still be to those who see only his failures, all the greatest of his immediate successors knew better. That again is why Wordsworth, whose mistakes, if less absurd, were much more tedious, has a place in literature that is also great even beyond his achievements. And to-day we need not be surprised if, in reaction against the immense Victorian popularity of the followers of Tennyson—who is not any the less on that account a supreme artist—there are those to-day who seek a new austerity and a new severity, even though they sometimes confuse it with what is merely bizarre or even repulsive. For Beauty is served even of those who know not her name.

For my own part, I am quite content that I have always worshipped consciously at that shrine. Beauty,

when the vision is purged to see through the outer vesture, is Truth, and when we can pierce to the deepest core of it is found to be Love. This is a goddess whom I have worshipped sometimes in the unlikeliest places, perhaps even where none else saw her, and she has given wine to my brain, and oil to my heart, and wings to my feet over the stoniest path. No doubt the herd will trample down my shrine some day, yet still worshipping Beauty, even without knowing it.

But I shall no longer be there.

18 February. 'There are no voices, O Rhodope, which are not soon mute, however tuneful: there is no name, with whatever emphasis of passionate love repeated, of which the echo is not faint at last.' I felt that long melodious sigh in my heart when I read in the papers of the death of a man I never met, though I often heard of him. He was known for his fine and useful and quiet work in the world. In my mind his name lingered tenderly because in one of his writings he once passingly described in appreciative happy words a certain beautiful voice and boyish laugh which to me was one of the most familiar dear things in the world. In that man's mind, at all events, I would say to myself, there still rings sympathetically the echo of a voice that may never again be heard.—But there is no voice of which the echo is not still at last.

It is well, I know, that it should be so, and the things that never die are only the things that never lived and never had the ravishing power over us that only belongs to the things that have once had life. If it were not so, life itself would grow intolerable with the memory of all the beauty it once held from creation day onwards and the songs of all the voices that once sang, and we could not live in a world where still for ever that wild music burthened every bough. So let us not too sadly mourn that there is no voice 'of which the echo is not faint at last.'

20 April. Now at last this slow keen March weather is melting into spring and a delicate sunny exhilaration, that is yet sharp, fills the air. To-day, even in a dingy

and sordid London suburb, the sun after rain has a clear brightness which almost makes the South seem near. This sun shines in through my window on to the blue Delft pot of tulips, and their flame-coloured globes become so radiant at that tender touch, so full of serene enchanting life, that, instead of meditating on the Art of Life as I had set out to do, I can only lean back and gaze at them, to inhale the atmosphere of their beauty, until I begin to feel that my eyes may soon fill with happy tears, for these tulips are linked in memory with bowls of tulips from which I drank loveliness before, in what different conditions, in what remote years.

So I wander into the streets, to feel the sun, and to note how unfamiliarly and how southerly white the pavements have grown beneath it, and the streets themselves and all they contain have blossomed into gay colour, women and men and children scattered among the street stalls, buying vegetables and fruits and little pots of flowers, for, after all, these people who sometimes seem so alien to me are feeling precisely the same emotions that I feel. There comes back to me the memory of other market-scenes in other parts of the world, there flashes on me the vision of the little Mallorcan market square of Palma as it was at this midday hour, as it may be at this moment, deserted, indeed, with the stalls still there, and the girl who slept alone amid her market goods with limbs flung apart in the heat. 'To travel is to die continually': I know it well, but such death is the portal of eternal life, and by it we enter the tradition of the world and garner up our own treasure-house of beauty.

The world, if we like to view it so, is fundamentally a very ugly place. If you like (of course you need not like) it is fundamentally—physically, metaphysically, spiritually, morally, socially, individually—as bad as possible. But there is this about it. By facing this ugly world, by ranging wide enough in it, afar, and above, and below—in Nature or in one's fellows or in oneself—one can find beauty. Slowly, patiently, with the exercise of much skill, one can divine beauty in it, one can reveal beauty, one can transmute it into beauty,

one can even create beauty. The number of points at which one has been able to do this is the measure of one's success in living.

So, after all, I have not wandered from the subject of my meditation. This is the Art of Life.

14 November. 'Like the ostrich that hides its head in the sand—.' One wonders whether any other simile is by civilized Man so often applied to himself, or rather to other members of his species, as that image. Any one who ventures into the beaten roads of journalism, or other literature of the degraded popular sort, during recent centuries cannot fail to hear the familiar sound of this simile, tolling like a funeral bell, at intervals, it would almost seem, of only a few minutes.<sup>1</sup>

One knows, almost instinctively, that the ostrich cannot possibly do anything of the sort. To make sure, I once inquired of a friend who happens to be the chief authority on the manners and customs of the ostrich—for in his writings on the subject he had not even condescended to mention this superstition—and he told me that the ostrich really has a habit which might give some faint show of plausibility to such a supposition, and that by lowering its head the ostrich is really enabled to become less conspicuous. But Man remains the only biped which puts its head in the sand, closing its eyes in order to be able to ignore the facts. No bird could afford to do it. The world is not made for the survival of such. Even Man could not afford to do it if in his earlier stages he had not been clever enough to build around himself a great protective wall within which he can now indulge all the vagaries of his stupidity with seeming impunity.

So from the days of the book of Job and the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and I know not how far earlier, Man has sent the ostrich out into the desert as the scapegoat to bear his own vices of stupidity and cruelty fastened to its head. And the passing bell of that simile con-

<sup>1</sup> The earliest reference given in the *Oxford Dictionary* is from an anonymous writer of 1623: 'Like the Austridge who, hiding her little head, supposeth her great body obscured.' It is not clear to me when the statement originated. I do not notice it in Pliny.

tinues to be heard at regular intervals, while the solemn procession of human imbecilities passes slowly along the roads of the world towards that eternal cemetery which is not yet in sight: 'Like the ostrich that hides its head in the sand—.'

*27 November.* I have walked once again by the familiar path to Kynance, as ever completely deserted at this time of the year, so that when I stood at the top of the cliff lost in dreams of the past, a dog, who seemed in sole possession of the little hotel far down below, catching sight of me, barked irritably at my intrusion on his privacy, until I discreetly disappeared along the opposite slope and settled down in the sunshine with my note-book.

It was not only dreams of the past that filled my brain. I had also been meditating as I came along the path on a subject that has sometimes occupied me before, the philosophy of obscenity, and its aesthetic place in life and in art, a subject for which this pure sky and clear water form the desirable background. There had casually flitted across my mind the thought of a woman who had visited me shortly before I left London, and that started the problem afresh. For my friend approaches the subject of obscenity with an undismayed air which seems to savour not at all of the English and even Puritanic environment out of which she springs. It is not that she suffers from too bridled or too unbridled a sexuality—she is the happy wife of a husband to whom she is devoted—nor is her serenity that of innocent indifference, for she is alertly interested while yet retaining a shy modesty. I am inclined to find the key to her attitude in the fact that there is Indian blood in her veins, and that she is remotely of the race of Vatsyayana, though she never, I think, read his book.

So I seem to see why in the modern western world, especially in England, most of all in America, it has become so difficult to be rightly obscene—and so unnaturally easy to be coarse and vulgar—and why obscenity is treated with so much reprehension and even horror. The natural play of the impulses has been

checked; the particular twist of our culture has on one side impeded the manifestations of obscenity and on the other side, when that impulse has burst its bonds, subjected it to our British tendency to what Coleridge called *nimety*, too-muchness, with the inevitable result that a natural reaction of disgust has been set up to fortify the artificial reaction of moral propriety. An old friend now dead—his sister had been a famous mystic and he himself once a Franciscan father, so perhaps he considered he was privileged to cultivate the esoteric branches of erotic literature—once lent me that huge novel of Cleland's which is considered the masterpiece among obscenely erotic books in English, and after the first hundred pages or so I found it tedious. One may approve of obscenity in principle; in practice even its recognized masters barely attain success.

Certainly, into every great and true picture of life there must necessarily enter both its obverse and reverse sides, not only the revelation of the stage but the intimation of what Lucretius called the *postscenia vitae*. Without an element of the obscene there can be no true and deep aesthetic or moral conception of life. But the obscene must be kept in its place, it must be controlled, it must be held in due relation to the whole. Only those who have been well trained in watching the stage of life can dare successfully to complete the picture by revealing life behind the scene. That, no doubt, is why in our northern world the great writers who have been obscene were mostly trained in the Church; they needed that discipline, they needed that vision of the world, to be aesthetically obscene. That also, no doubt, is why the merely loose and small un-disciplined men can never be rightly obscene, however hard they try. It is only the great men who are truly obscene. It is that touch which stamps their genius. It gives profundity and truth to their vision of life. If they had not dared to be obscene they could never have dared to be great. Their vision of the world would have remained fatally marred.

*Christmas Day.* When I ponder, as it has often been

my lot to do, on the details of the intimate histories of men and women—on that side of the sphere of men and women—on that side of the sphere of life, I mean, which is not shown to the sun—I am so often impressed by the benefits they derive, whether or not they are always willing to recognize it, from what we commonly hold to be weaknesses and vices.

We may, of course, argue—and that is indeed the consideration which most often commends itself to me—that we are called upon so to reconstruct our conventional scheme of right and of wrong, of good and of evil, that nothing which aids a human soul in its path through life, provided it injures no other soul, should ever be termed a weakness or a vice.

Yet even if we preserve our conventional scheme of moral rules, and evade any revolutionary moral reconstruction, there is still ample scope for the practice of the higher virtues of judgment and charity. It is still open to us to exercise sympathy and insight; we may still exert our intelligence in unravelling those complicated threads of life and character which are never twisted in quite the same strands for any two individuals. Thus we may find that what we continue to insist on describing technically as a weakness or a vice is justified by its joy-bestowing and life-stimulating properties. We shall have to say, as Goethe said, with his usual assurance of the divine process, that God has given us our naughtinesses to help us. He might have added that when they fail to help us it is best to give them back with as little delay as possible.

29 April 1923. I remember how—nearly fifty years ago now—a friend in Australia who had formerly been a New South Wales Government official, told me he had once come officially in contact with Anthony Trollope, and how surprised he had been to note, though he was himself a man of singularly mild disposition, the extreme nervousness and timidity of the famous novelist.

Trollope wrote an *Autobiography*. I have never more than glanced at it, but a distinguished literary critic

has just read it in a new reprint and he published his impressions of it in yesterday's *Nation*. For our critic, Trollope seems in his *Autobiography* the stolid incarnation of energy and audacity. The critic even refuses to believe Trollope's own statement that he was tormented in boyhood by his companions; 'if any one tormented him Trollope would have knocked him out,' the critic imagines; 'he was a force of Nature. . . . There was about him, almost physically, an animal odour of masculinity.'

Trollope was an artist, as much so in imaging himself as his other creations, and I am amused to see how he has evidently been able to deceive even the elect. For I cannot doubt that so good a critic has correctly, however ingenuously, perceived at least the surface values of Trollope's *Autobiography*, although one would have supposed that to an acute critic the kind of man whom he supposes Trollope to have been is not the kind of man who devotes his life to fine literary creation. At all events the great literary artists I have come across were not like that, and if we go back to the ages commonly regarded as more robust I should be surprised to learn on unimpeachable authority that Chaucer and Spenser and Shakespeare bore about them a peculiarly animal odour of masculinity.

We may hear rather too much of psycho-analysis nowadays. But evidently there is some advantage for a literary critic in possessing a tincture of that discipline. When Alfred Adler formulated his doctrine of the 'masculine protest'—the tendency of sensitive and feminine and maybe defective souls to imagine themselves other than they are, and sometimes even to approximate themselves to what they imagine—he was throwing an illuminative ray of light over the artist, at all events those artists who have been more concerned with the arts of fiction than of science. Whenever we seem to come in contact with an artist who is excessively stolid and aggressively masculine we may profitably think of Trollope.

26 June. I went up to London from the sea yesterday—flinging away recklessly one of the few hardly won

days of warm sunshine this month has offered—to see the Phoenix's performance of Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*. The sacrifice, after all, was worth while. The Phoenix has done nothing better, not only in the acting but in all the accessories, not least the music. It all comes out as a finely harmonized unity.

It was well worth doing. So many years have passed since I was concerned with its text that *The Faithful Shepherdess* only lingered in memory as a vaguely pleasant thing written in free delicious verse that was beautifully adequate without being of supreme order. Now for the first time I clearly realize what the Arcadian pastoral, of which this is so admirable a type, represents in the history of the human spirit.

That the pastoral is the manifestation of an artificial mood of unreal playfulness in life seems usually to have been taken for granted. And it was so. But so to regard it, and to leave the matter there, is to overlook the motive source of its inspiration and the cause of its power. How it arose, the really essential question, is left unanswered.

When we consider that question, we see that, however artificially unreal the pastoral—poem, novel, or play—may seem to us, it arose primarily as a reaction against an artificially unreal and dissolving culture. The pastoral never originated in an integral, simple, vigorous, straightforward stage of culture, still within actual sight of any true pastoral life. The Greeks of the age of Pericles had no use for *Daphnis and Chloe* and even *The Faithful Shepherdess* came a little before its due time in England, a little too near the robust classic period of Elizabeth, and so was not well received when first put on the stage. The pastoral belongs not to an age of strong faith and rugged action but rather to an age when faith has become uncertain and action hesitant or tortuous, an age when criticism comes to be applied to what seems a dissolute time, a time of vice and hypocrisy, a time which has lost its old ideals. The attitude of Ben Jonson towards his own age is herein significant, and it is illustrated even in his laudatory verses about this very pastoral of Fletcher's,

a poem 'murdered,' he says, by a generation unworthy of it, though it may not have been altogether the corruption of the age but in part the lingering 'old-fashioned simplicity' of it which rendered Fletcher's audience obtuse to the significance of *The Faithful Shepherdess*.

So it is that the pastoral arises not as an unreal artificiality but as a protest against an age of what seems unreal artificiality, put into the only form which is possible to poetic minds who feel what seems to their sensitive tempers the defect of their own age.

Fletcher, following the Italians who had earlier realized the same thing in their own more advanced culture, understood, or else instinctively felt, that the time had come in the course of the Renaissance mood, then even in England approaching its end, to find enchanting by contrast with his own age the picture of the old strong simple Pagan age, such as tradition represented it, yet touched with a tincture of what was sweetest and purest in the Christian world. He sought to present therein the implicit and indirect criticism of an age such as he felt his own was becoming, with its confusions and its vices and its perversities and its slaughter and its deceit. Such a form of art—a pastoral tragic-comedy Fletcher called it—has its superficial aspect of artificial unreality, but beneath that is the life-blood of a genuine impulse of art, exactly adapted—as such a spirit as Fletcher's, so sensitively human and so finely cultured, could not fail to make it—to the situation of the immediately post-Elizabethan age of the early seventeenth century.

For the general public, at all events that of the theatre, it appeared a little prematurely because they were not themselves yet clear where they stood. It was not till half a century later that the age, having become more conscious of its own state, was enabled to enjoy *The Faithful Shepherdess*, and Pepys notes that it is 'much thronged after and often shown.'

To-day, after centuries of neglect, by those few people privileged to be present it is again approved, and is perhaps the most genuinely and enthusiastically applauded of the Phoenix's excellent revivals of old plays. Our

age has an analogy to that of the Restoration. We, too, have lately emerged from a long period of war and we experience the same reactions as the Restoration period experienced. We can enter sympathetically into the things they enjoyed because, even under an antique garment, they answer to our own needs. Our youthful fire-eaters of the Great War are beginning to feel a little disillusioned. Their patriotic thirst for blood has cooled; I do not hear them talk, as I heard a young officer in 1914, of cutting up their enemies 'like pork.' They begin to understand that murder is an activity in which it is desirable to exercise a certain moderation; they are visited by a suspicion that in seeking to destroy a youthful nation potent for the civilization of the future they have perhaps earned a name quite other than that of 'heroes.' They begin to be ready for such criticism as Fletcher sprinkled over his age when he playfully presented a magical world in which one may be brutally murdered twice before beginning to lead a happy life. There is still hope for the world!

23 August. It all seems like a dream, this visit to the Midi, to a region I have always avoided before but desired to see something of at last, from the swift flight in the air to Paris—so tame after that of two years ago!—to the return journey in the night Rapide from Nice, with windows closed through the sombre glow of flaming forest trees in the Esterel, at the end of this southern dream of ever cloudless skies and unbroken heat: Tamaris, Antibes with Juan les Pins, Cagnes, lying in the sea or sun-bathing on the shore, with La Douce by my side, a miracle of radiant energy under the sun of her ancestral land, at times threatening to become almost as fierce as it, while I have never been so lazy in my life before, and even now with the shadow of that delightful languor over me, even with this 'invasion of Polar air' over England which the Meteorological Bureau reports as though it were a novelty, I find no inclination to write down our adventures or to tell of the delightful friends we sought out at Seyne-sur-Mer and the atmosphere of the *Arabian Nights* that

surrounded their villa. It all seems like a dream, even to the bugs that the horrified La Douce found in her bed at the luxurious Grand Hotel.

Now, a few days after my return—looking through accumulated piles of letters—I come on a press-cutting, sent by some unknown American friend, who, I am sure, had no thought of awaking me from my dream, entitled ‘Unscientific and Filthy,’ and narrating the prosecution—though it was not clear how the matter ended—of a man somewhere in Canada for selling certain books in which I feel a very personal interest, as being of a most horrible character, an opinion with which the seller himself agreed, while the magistrate was duly solemn.

At first I felt amusement touched with annoyance. It seemed as though I had been taken back into an antediluvian world I thought had fortunately vanished, or that someone had prised up a moss-grey stone and unexpectedly revealed the loathsome and bewildered maggots running about beneath. But I quickly accepted the situation with unsmiling serenity.

It has seemed to me, and especially of recent years, that people are apt to accept one’s new vision of the world too easily, to accept indeed without really accepting, not grasping clearly what it is that they accept. One is thus seemingly joined by people who continue calmly to follow the same old course, however sympathetic they seem to become toward one’s work, passing from violent repulsion to complacent agreement and yet not changing one jot. When I encounter this attitude, I feel that I have not made sufficiently clear what it is that I stand for; I feel that I want to warn the public off the dangerous ground they are treading. These people have so often no right to agree with me. They have not gone through the long and painful noviciate which would alone create a new heart within them. They ought to remain at their old stage of violent repulsion. So that when I hear what Canadian police inspectors think about my books I am reassured. There are still people engaged in maintaining an element which is essential to the complete harmony of my little universe.

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*In each section of this list the volumes are arranged, as a general rule, alphabetically under the authors' names. Where authors appear in more than one section, a reference is given, viz. : (See also FICTION). The number at the end of each item is the number of the volume in the series.*

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